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IN THE SHADOW OF ELLEN WHITE
Fundamentalist and Evangelical
Seventh-day Adventists in Conflict

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Contents

Introduction	1-3
The Effect of Ellen White's Death	3-4
The 1919 Bible Conference	4-11
The Social, Political, and Religious Climate of the 1920s	11-16
The Issue of Inspiration	17-34
The Influence of M.L.Andreason	35-38
Seventh-day Adventism and the Evangelical Conferences	38-61
Adventist Hlstorians Come of Age	62-69
The International Prophetic Guidance Workshop	69-70
Where Are We Today?	70-80
Bibliography	81-84

Introduction

Christian churches often struggle with inner conflict. This has been true from apostolic days until the present time. However it is easier to view such struggles in other denominations, and those well removed from our present time. The struggle dealt with here relates to the proper usage of the writings of Ellen G. White in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. How her writings were used has been basic to most struggles that have gone on within the Seventh-day Adventist Church for almost 150 years.

At times this paper digresses a little from this theme, in order to show how far-reaching are the implications of the theme itself. During her lifetime Ellen White fought to have her writings correctly used, however, after her death there developed a misuse the like of which she would never have approved. Yet, within the writings themselves were latent ideas regarding higher education that would eventually work to bring the denomination back more on course. But this would not be without a grim struggle. That struggle is still very much alive today. For this reason this subject is so important for every serious-minded Seventh-day Adventist.

This paper begins with the 1919 Bible Conference, held a few years after Ellen Whites death, when those who had worked closely with her were expressing their concerns regarding a wrong use of her writings. This wrong usage was becoming widespread. Then, this paper will look at the aftermath of that conference which led to the replacement of A.G.Daniells as General Conference President, partly because of his views regarding the role and function of Ellen White. Next it will focus on the subsequent silencing in the denomination of those who held similar views regarding

her function as a messenger of God. Following on, it will explore how the social, political, economic, and religious climate of North America during the 1920s strengthened the Fundamentalist Adventist's position in the conflict. Prominence is given to the work of M.L.Andreason during the 1930s and 40s as an important contributor to the ideas held by fundamentalist inclined Seventh-day Adventists. Then it will analyse the contribution of Edward Heppenstall towards developing a more evangelical Seventh-day Adventism during the 1950s, and the social, political, economic, and religious climate in North America during this time which was in so many respects a reversal of the scene of the 1920s.

The legacy of these two movements within Seventh-day Adventism was a clash during the mid 1950s between Fundamentalist and Evangelical inclined Seventh-day Adventists. This paper will demonstrate that this same clash is also mirrored in the rest of the Protestant world. However it is maintained that the case of Seventh-day Adventism was further complicated by the clash of different understandings in regard to the correct role and function of Ellen White as a prophetess to the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Finally this paper will study Seventh-day Adventist historians in the 1970s who while endeavoring to understand her work as an historian, health reformer and theologian, link up with the discovery of the 1919 Bible Conference minutes which demonstrated to them that the issues they were facing were not new; but were rather the legacy of some scholars and administrators from previous generations who had failed to share with the larger Seventh-day Adventist community what they knew by personal experience to be the truth regarding Ellen Whites function and authority. This paper seeks to show that the Seventh-day Adventist Church remains a divided

church to this day largely because of the continuing failure of those who are better informed to educate the larger church community regarding the correct role and function of Ellen White.

The Effect of Ellen White's Death

The death of the founder of any movement is always of great significance. This was certainly true for the Seventh-day Adventist Church with the death of Ellen White in 1915. Other religious movements of the past have shown a tendency to "pull down the shutters" and strive towards conserving rather than exploring when their founding fathers passed from the scene; this is also clearly mirrored in the experience of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Bull and Lockhart describe the passing of Ellen White from the Adventist church as a reason why the church lost much of its liveliness and innovation. They affirm that the church then came under the influence of the same forces that were affecting other denominations.¹

"At the turn of the twentieth century, Adventism underwent significant change. Ellen White died in 1915, and the church was robbed of its chief means of authorising innovation. The liveliness and flexibility that had characterised Adventist theological debate in the nineteenth century evaporated. The church became more cautious.... Consolidation rather than experimentation was the order of the day... The intellectually disciplined theological debates that had filled the pages of *The Review* now disappeared... They were also accepting new ideas, usually without arguing them out in the way their forebears would have done. Adventists, like the Fundamentalists with whom they now identified themselves, quietly accepted Trinitarianism; took a stronger line on inerrancy of the Bible; accepted, in line with the penal-substitutionary theory, that the cross was a place of atonement; and reaffirmed their belief in human perfectability in less mystical terms than had been current in the 1890s. At the same time they updated their eschatology with reference to the new scientific and political climate. The writings of Ellen White and the Bible now functioned not as a source of new ideas but as a compendium of truths to be expounded and memorised... **Adventist theology has developed in parallel with that of the mainstream. It was at its most distinctive during a period of great diversity; it became fundamentalist in the era of fundamentalism; and softened with the rise of evangelicalism.**" [emphasis mine] Malcolm Bull, and Keith Lockhart, Seeking A Sanctuary: Seventh-day Adventism and the American Dream, (New York: Harper and Row, 1989), pp88-89. The authors of this book present their credentials

No church can remain immune from what is happening within society. It would appear that the culture of the day puts pressure on the church, and when the Christian church faces this, not one denomination escapes including Seventh-day Adventism. At times these pressures for change are for the better and other times for the worse.

The history of the Seventh-day Adventist church reflects many eras of change. This paper seeks to trace through the era of the 1920s when the church was profoundly influenced by the same forces which promoted Protestant Fundamentalism and then on to the 1950s when the church, influenced by many new factors, began to move back to what many would claim to be its more natural position, which could be described as Evangelicalism. Both of these movements were mirrored in many other Protestant churches which under the influence of the same forces produced both Fundamentalist and Evangelical movements within various Protestant denominations.

The 1919 Bible Conference

On December 6, 1974 Dr Donald Yost, the senior archivist at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist headquarters in Washington, D.C. while setting

to evaluate Seventh-day Adventism in their preface as follows:

"The book draws upon a great variety of published and unpublished sources. Research commenced in 1984 and was conducted mainly in the libraries and archives of the denominations colleges and universities in America and Britain. The summer of 1985 was spent in interviewing dozens of Adventist leaders, hospital administrators, laymen, and representatives of the church's various institutions and groups. In addition, the authors both have many years of participant observation on which to draw. One of the authors, although not an Adventist and never a baptised member of the church, was born into an Adventist family. The other was also brought up as an Adventist and was educated in Adventist institutions in Britain and America."

up the newly formed archives, quite by accident discovered two packets of papers containing some 2,400 pages of typewritten material which were part of the minutes taken at a Bible Conference held in Takoma Park, Maryland, in July 1919. The subsequent publication of those minutes in Spectrum² gave Adventists of the late 1970s a unique opportunity to see how some of the contemporaries of Ellen White viewed her function and authority. This was a world of thought that few, if any, of even the best-informed Seventh-day Adventists ever knew existed.

The main focus of attention for the purposes of this paper comes not on the actual Bible Conference itself; but rather on a smaller "after meeting" called "The Bible and History Teachers Council" which was attended by some 22 delegates of whom some of the following names were the most prominent:

A.G.Daniells, who was the current president of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference.

G.B.Thompson, field secretary of the General Conference.

F.M.Wilcox, editor of the Review and Herald which was the major magazine circulated among church members.

M.E.Kern, formerly president of the Foreign Missionary Seminary in Washington D.C. Later this college was to become Columbia Union College.

W.W.Prescott, formerly editor of the Review and Herald and then a field secretary of the General Conference.

H.C.Lacey, religion teacher at the Foreign Mission Seminary.

W.E.Howell, editor of The Christian Educator. A journal produced by the church

²Spectrum: The Journal of the Association of Adventist Forums. Takoma Park, Maryland. USA. Vol 10:1

for the benefit of parents and teachers.

W.G.Wirth, a religion teacher at Pacific Union College, the church's major institution of learning on the west coast of North America.

M.C.Wilcox, book editor for the Pacific Press, the church's major press situated on the West coast of North America.

Plus a long list of others who held prominent administrative, educational and publishing responsibilities.

It is quite surprising to read of these men, who were respected leaders and scholars, making statements like those shown in the following extracts:

"Every Christian is therefore in duty bound to take the Bible as a perfect rule of faith and duty. He should pray fervently to be aided by the Holy Spirit in searching the scriptures for the whole truth, and for his whole duty. He is not at liberty to turn from them to learn his duty through any of the gifts." ³

"Well, now, as I understand it, Sister White never claimed to be an authority on history, and never claimed to be a dogmatic teacher on theology, like Mrs Eddy's book on teaching. She just gave out fragmentary statements, but left the Pastors and evangelists and preachers to work out all these problems of scripture and of theology and of history..." ⁴

"Those who have not heard, as we have here, and are taking the other side of the question,- some of them are deliberately saying that neither you nor Professor Prescott believe the Testimonies." ⁵

"In our estimate of the spirit of prophecy, isn't its value to us more in the spiritual light it throws into our own hearts and lives than in the intellectual accuracy in historical and theological matters...wouldn't it be a splendid thing if a little pamphlet were written setting forth in plain, simple, straight-forward style the facts as we have them, -simple, sacred facts,- so that we could put them into the hands of enquiring students? Voice: Our

³ Ibid., 33. F.M. Wilcox quoting James White from Review and Herald April 21, 1851.

⁴ Ibid., 34. A.G. Daniels.

⁵ Ibid., 37. H.C.Lacey to A.G.Daniels.

enemies would publish it everywhere." ⁶

"Really, that is my biggest problem. I shall certainly be discredited if I go back and give this view. I would like to see some published statement given out by those who lead this work so that if that thing should come up there would be some authority back of it, because I am in for a lot of trouble on that thing. I would like to see something done, because that education is going right on, and our students are being sent out with the idea that the testimonies are verbally inspired, and woe be to the man out where I am that does not line up to that..." ⁷

"Is it well to let our people in general go on holding to the verbal inspiration of the testimonies? When we do that, aren't we preparing for a crisis that will be very serious some day?" ⁸

"If we had always taught the truth on this question, we would not have any trouble or shock in the denomination now. But the shock is because we have not taught the truth, and have put the testimonies on a plane where she says they do not stand. We have claimed more for them than she did." ⁹

To the reader of these minutes it is obvious that the leaders of the church, along with the Bible teachers present, did not feel comfortable in presenting what they knew to be the truth regarding the subject of the inspiration of EGW to the laity of the church. Although most present at the conference were pleased with the open and frank discussion about some sensitive issues regarding inspiration yet the subsequent reaction by some who were also present shows that not all were in agreement with presenters like Daniells, Prescott, and Lacey.

Among those not pleased with the discussion two men stand out in particular: J S Washburn, a well known preacher, and C.E.Holmes who was the Washington

⁶ Ibid., 38. H.C. Lacey.

⁷ Ibid., 40. W.G. Wirth.

⁸ Ibid., 46. J.N. Anderson.

⁹ Ibid., 49. G.B. Thompson.

correspondent for the denomination's Southern Watchman magazine. They did not openly challenge the General Conference president in the discussions for, if they had, it would have become obvious that they were out of their depth. He had been dealing with these issues for many years and had personal contact with the prophet herself and could draw from these experiences. W.C.White, the prophet's son and long time helper, although invited to the conference, chose not to do so because of his heavy involvement in compiling the book Counsels on Medical Work. However, if he had attended, the evidence suggests that he would have supported what the progressives like Daniells were saying.¹⁰ His letters of response to questions asked by Leroy Froom, as recorded in the appendices of Selected Messages Volume 3, show his views of inspiration and indicate that he saw the role and function of his mother as a prophetess similarly to the progressives like Daniells.¹¹

Even though the opponents of the views being openly expressed did not challenge the progressives during the conference they certainly did afterwards. Washburn produced a tract written to Holmes entitled The Startling Omega And Its True Genealogy. In it he labels the ideas expressed at the conference as "the new theology" and states that he and others were going to "stand by the old landmarks."¹² He also sees as part of "this deadly heresy" the issue over the "Daily" in Daniel ch 8 as being part of this new theology in as much as it was challenging the old view of

¹⁰ This conclusion is supported by "A Response to Two Explanations of W.W.Prescott's 1915 Letter" by Gilbert Valentine. Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI. June 1981.

¹¹ Ellen White, Selected Messages Vol 3 (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Assn, 1980) Appendix A, B, and C.

¹² J. S. Washburn, Tract, The Startling Omega And Its True Genealogy April 18, 1920.

the pioneers as endorsed by Ellen White in her first book entitled Early Writings. Washburn continued his allegations by saying that changing a point of teaching so vital in the area of prophetic interpretation is to open the flood gate for all sorts of new ideas and undermine the authority of the Spirit of Prophecy. This, he continued, surely was the "Omega of Apostasy" that Ellen White had warned against."¹³

In "An Open Letter To Elder A.G.Daniells" Washburn claimed that the ideas expressed at the Bible Conference were part of the Omega apostasy as forewarned by Ellen White.

"...in one of the most terrible warnings that God has ever sent to this people through the Spirit of Prophecy, on page 211, volume 4, of the Testimonies 'Satan's chief work is at the headquarters of our faith.' Then the Omega must develop in Washington, for that is the headquarters of our faith. The Alpha centered and developed in Battle Creek, the old headquarters. The Omega must centre in the new headquarters, Washington, D.C., the logical centre, in harmony with the prophecy of Revelation 13th chapter, for the last struggle for truth and liberty. The Omega will develop and centre in Washington, D.C."¹⁴

He called the 1919 Bible Conference a "diet of doubts" and claimed the work of

¹³ The statement he refers to is found in Series B, No 7 p57. Readers today may find the statement in Selected Messages Vol.1 (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1958), p 93-208. On page 203 it can be clearly seen that she was talking of the Kellogg apostasy as being both the Alpha and Omega. However Washburn and Holmes like so many others since their time have seen their theological opponents as being the Omega that she spoke of. For further study on this point see The Sanctuary And The Atonement prepared by the Biblical Research Committee of the Gen. Conference of SDA, (Washington, DC: Review and Herald 1981) 533-537.

¹⁴J. S. Washburn "An Open Letter to Elder A.G.Daniels and an appeal to the General Conference", May 1 1922. 26-27.

"higher criticism" was being applied to the writings of Ellen White.¹⁵ It is important to notice how he continually uses this word "higher criticism" when talking of what he calls the "new theology". In doing this, he is playing upon the fears that many loyal Seventh-day Adventists of the time would have heard about the inroads being made into Protestantism by the more "liberal churches" that had tried to reconcile Darwinism with their faith. This was a subtle ploy used by Washburn and Holmes which, when used in a Seventh-day Adventist setting was sure to strike a chord of response considering the religious and political climate of the day.

As a result of what was shared at the Bible Conference in 1919, Holmes wrote a tract to Washburn and had it published. In it he stated:

"There is a dangerous doctrine that is rapidly permeating the ranks of our people. I feel that it ought to be met and met squarely. It is this: that Sister White is not an authority on history. Some, as you know, go even further, and claim that she is not an authority on doctrine or health reform: That was practically the position taken last summer, and stands as a sort of unwritten law. During the Bible Conference in the summer of 1919 I heard it stated again and again by a number of our Bible and history teachers that Sister White is not an authority on history. If it were to go no further than these persons it would be bad enough, but think of the possibilities for evil when these men stand as teachers. These erroneous views will be poured into the receptive minds of our young people to undermine their faith in the Spirit of Prophecy and this message."¹⁶

Trouble was on the way for those who had spoken so freely of their convictions at the 1919 Bible Conference. Those who would oppose them had the advantage of the social, economic, political, and religious climate of the day. In addition, their

¹⁵ Ibid 29.

¹⁶ Claude E. Holmes "Have We An Infallible Spirit Of Prophecy" Tract written to J.S.Washburn April 1, 1920. p1.

views of inspiration would probably reflect the majority view in Adventism and this they would be able to use to their advantage.

The Social, Political, Economic, and Religious climate of the 1920's in North America.

The 1920s were a time of cultural instability in North America. Since their founding days by the Pilgrim Fathers, the North Americans had a sense of destiny that God was using them to set up a "New Israel". The United States of America would be a truly Christian nation and perhaps the world's last hope. Their early society had been dominated by white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants commonly called "WASPS". Seventh-day Adventists shared this heritage and reflected closely this American dream.¹⁷ However, the 19/20s saw many different forces at work threatening to destroy this dream.

Prominent among many concerns that conservative Christians shared at this time were the effects of Darwinism. Although Darwin had begun to publish his works in the 1850s it was to take many decades for the full implications of what he was teaching to take effect. History shows that a new school of thought takes time to work its way through the universities to colleges, high schools, and on to the arts and sciences. This was certainly true of the ideas of Darwin and eventually, it began also to effectually challenge the religious scene. The thought that man had evolved from a lower orders of species and could now control his own evolution gained new

¹⁷ Bull and Lockhart, Seeking a Sanctuary, develop this theme extensively throughout their book.

impetus from the ending of World War One. At this time there arose a spirit of optimism that this was "the war to end all wars". It was believed that mankind had learned its lesson and from now on there would be the development of a better world.

This philosophy became attractive to those churches who decided to adjust their faith to incorporate "the new Darwinism". These mainline churches, often termed "liberal or modernistic," felt that the Christian faith and its understanding of the Bible must be adjusted to incorporate the latest teachings of science. It led them to question many of the supernatural aspects of the Bible story, especially the creation account. Some set about to demythologise the Bible. Foremost were the German scholars who utilised the techniques of "scientific history" to picture the Bible merely as a compilation of various types of literature gathered over a period of one thousand years. Some saw this as a selling-out of the Christian faith and firmly resisted it.

An example of the fruitage of Darwinism could be seen in the 1917 Russian Bolshevik revolution with all its slaughter and opposition to the Christian faith. Many conservative Protestants believed that these new ideas must be firmly resisted or else they would erode the Christian heritage of the nation and pave the way for Communism to take hold in North America.

In addition, one million immigrants were pouring into the country each year. Large numbers of them were Roman Catholics and Jews. This alarmed many WASPS into thinking that the USA was losing its Protestant identity.

At the same time rapid urbanisation and industrialisation was changing the face of what had been rural North America. With this came the usual problems of increase in crime, poverty and secularism. This was also a cause for concern among the WASPS.

Against this background, there arose a Fundamentalist movement among the WASPS which gained great appeal from the fact that it was attempting to preserve the American dream. For 40 years this movement had been developing, but in the 1920s their battle against the liberals reached new heights. The New Dictionary of Theology describes early USA Fundamentalism in the following manner:

"Many Fundamentalist groups had lists of fundamental doctrines, though no list was ever standard. The commonest points were the inerrancy of scripture, the deity of Christ, his virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, Christ's resurrection, and his second coming.

During the 1920s Fundamentalists fought hard against modernist gains in the major northern Presbyterian and Baptist denominations. Smaller Fundamentalist controversies occurred in other denominations, and parallel splits between conservatives and liberals took place in a number of churches in the United States and Canada. Meanwhile, Fundamentalists took on a cultural as well as an ecclesiastical dimension as they attacked aspects of moral erosion after world war 1 {sic}.... The spread of evolutionary teaching was seen as undermining the authority of the Bible in American life and fostering moral relativism. Marxism, Romanism, alcohol, tobacco, dancing, card playing and theatre attendance were other major targets for Fundamentalist attacks." ¹⁸

George M. Marsden adds;

"Between 1917 and the early 1920s American conservative evangelicals underwent a dramatic transformation...after 1920 conservative evangelical councils were dominated by "fundamentalists" engaged in holy warfare to drive the scourge of modernism out of church and culture... After

¹⁸ Sinclair B. Ferguson, and David F. Wright, New dictionary of Theology (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), article Fundamentalism.

1920 fundamentalism became conspicuously associated with a major component of social and political alarm-most evident in the effort to save American civilisation from the dangers of evolutionism. This perception of cultural crisis, in turn, appears to have created a greater sense of theological urgency."¹⁹

The militant Fundamentalists of this era had a wide range of ills against which they were crusading namely: alcohol, tobacco, immodesty, the wearing of jewelry, labour unions, dancing, attendance at movie theatres, bowling, cardplaying, gambling, etc.²⁰

One can see at a glance that so much of what Fundamentalists were pushing would find a ready response in the SDA ranks. Appendix "A" shows some cartoons created by Fundamentalists from this era and reveal their thinking. Appendix "B" has cartoons taken from Seventh-day Adventist books of the same era showing the Seventh-day Adventist reaction. The latter shows that according to Seventh-day Adventist thinking, a choice had to be made between two camps. Liberalism and Fundamentalism were the only two alternatives. There was no middle ground.

That Seventh-day Adventists should readily identify with the Fundamentalists of their day would be expected when you consider that Fundamentalists were defending the Bible account of creation against the liberals.* To lose the Bible account of creation would also mean to lose the Sabbath. The issue over creation versus evolution was of great significance in helping to align Seventh-day Adventists in the

¹⁹ George M. Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture (Oxford: Oxford Uni Press, 1980) 142.

²⁰ Ibid., 156-163.

fundamentalist mode, particularly as they had a prominent champion fighting the creationist cause in George McCready Price. He, in fact, became the most frequently-quoted name when Fundamentalists were pressed to give scientific evidence for their creationist ideas. As well, Fundamentalists were upholding Christian standards almost as much as Seventh-day Adventists and EGW had always done, while liberals were changing them to the apparent spiritual hurt of their congregations.²¹

An examination of Seventh-day Adventist periodicals of this era until the 1950s reveals that they were constantly quoting from fundamentalists, distancing themselves

²¹ Gary Land gives a summary of the reasons why SDAs were more inclined to sympathise with Fundamentalists than modernists. "...Seventh-day Adventist gave short shift to modernism, as they called liberal Christianity...Rather than accept higher criticism, Adventist affirmed strongly the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible. As an editor of the *Review* put it: 'when we stop to consider it, it is a terrible charge which the critics have brought against God in the declaration that his word is inspired but not infallible. That would make God the inspirer of that which is fallible, faulty, false, for it is only the infallible that is certain and true.'

Seventh-day Adventists also allied themselves with Fundamentalists on a non theological issue - prohibition...

Despite their agreement on such issues as the inspiration of the Bible, evolution, and prohibition, however when it came to the fundamentalist movement itself, Adventists spoke both approvingly and critically. On the one hand, the church affirmed that it was Fundamentalist, with Francis Wilcox saying that Adventists 'should count themselves the chief of Fundamentalists today'. Adventists also gave the Fundamentalist movement one of its leading anti-evolution writers in the person of George McCready Price, who according to one scholar, moved Fundamentalists towards the affirmation of the six day creation, universal deluge, and six-thousand year old earth...the Adventist Church also had to distinguish itself clearly from the Fundamentalist movement in order to maintain its identity. Therefore, Adventist writers attacked Fundamentalism on the issue of God's law.... By aligning themselves with fundamentalism, yet maintaining their individuality through their emphasis on the Sabbath, Seventh-day Adventists continued to believe that they had indeed a unique purpose in God's plan." Gary Land, Adventism in America (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986), 167-169.

with horror at what was happening in the other denominations.²² Sympathy towards Fundamentalism was greatly strengthened in the Seventh-day Adventist church during this period leading up to the early 1920s.

The moment of truth arrived in Seventh-day Adventism at the 1922 General Conference Session. At that time a conservative thrust effected an alignment of Seventh-day Adventism with Fundamentalism.

²² Ministry, July 1928 16, a report is given on the world Fundamentalist congress. It shows how they highly regarded our McCready Price.

Ibid., Oct 1933 3, Branson shows how SDA's are fundamentalists of the fundamentalists.

Ibid., July 1939 38 McCready Price fights against the traditional attitude of fundamentalists towards education by saying we ought not to be afraid to train our youth in advanced science as all true science is in harmony with the Bible and quotes Spirit of Prophecy (SOP) support.

Ibid., Feb 1941 7, Thiele makes a plea for higher learning. He claims that higher critics are more willing to study than us and makes a plea for us to be intelligent critics.

Ibid., Index 1928 to 1947 shows a large number of articles on Modernism but nothing from 1947 to 1961.

Ibid., April 1965 16, article by Wilbur Nelson "Are Adventists Fundamentalist? He shows how fundamentalism has changed and we ought not to use this term to describe SDA's. This article is significant as after a long silence it shows a new departure in our attitudes to Fundamentalists. I will endeavour to show later that it is not so much a change in Fundamentalists as a change in SDA's in the 1950s which has caused us to write this way.

In these Ministry articles I can detect a transition taking place in Adventism from naive primitive fundamentalism in the early 1920's to considering education during the 1940's which will eventually be embraced and lead the church along with other protestant churches out fundamentalism in the 1950's to a more middle of the road approach. There is not too much to comment on in the Review and Herald regarding this subject which would seem to indicate that the SDA church as a whole was looking from a considerable distance at what was happening at the other churches and not getting too involved.

The Issue of Inspiration.

Through much of its history, Seventh-day Adventism has been a sub-culture of American Protestantism. Coming out of conservative Protestant denominations and having a leadership which was not generally highly educated, there was a natural tendency towards the anti-intellectualism of fundamentalism. It would seem that most Seventh-day Adventist members held a view of inspiration closely aligned to that of the Protestant Fundamentalists, namely, verbal dictation and inerrancy.

Evidence for this comes from the fact that when church leaders set about to revise the Ellen White Testimonies in 1883, the reaction of the church community was negative.²³ This was the first time Seventh-day Adventists had expressed themselves on the subject and it was necessary to do so in order to accommodate the work of Ellen White. Again, when we hear what the well informed church leaders at the 1919 Bible Conference were saying it would seem that most of the membership were not well-informed and not too many were willing to inform them for fear of being misunderstood. It would seem that there has always been an inner group who have understood mainly through their contact with Ellen White; but who have not felt free to share what they know with the community at large for fear of career reprisals. If it had not been for the influence of EGW on this subject Seventh-day Adventists would probably have always been the strictest of Fundamentalists. However, the availability of some of the autograph copies of her writings, plus what she has written on the subject of inspiration have been an influence on the church. While the rest of

²³ Alden Thompson has a lengthy discussion of what took place when the Testimonies were revised. He outlines the shock of the Adventist community, the criticism of Adventist enemies and the attitude of Ellen White to it all. Adventist Review, Sept 12 1985, 14

the Protestant world have been struggling with the issues of inspiration, Seventh-day Adventists have struggled with the subject as it applies to the inspiration of Ellen White.

A long list of men may be cited who endeavored to understand her concept of inspiration when it appeared so contrary to what they believed about the subject.²⁴ Others like Prescott, Daniels, and W.C.White, were helped by associating with her in her writing and thus had a more realistic view of the subject. However, they were never really willing or able to educate the rest of the Seventh-day Adventist community. Undoubtably there was polarisation in the Adventist community over this subject. What was the exact nature of her inspiration? What was her function and authority? These issues have been fought inside Seventh-day Adventism since the earliest days and carry on to this present time.²⁵

It became a central issue at the 1922 General Conference Session when conservative (it may be even more correct to say fundamentalist forces) worked to get Daniells removed from the General Conference presidency. It would seem that there were a variety of reasons why Daniells was removed:

He had been in office for some 20 years.

He had alienated some Union Conference presidents and Columbia Union

²⁴ Men such as D.N. Canright, A.T. Jones, A.F. Ballenger, and J.H. Kellogg, etc.

²⁵ Issues over the "Daily", the "Law in Galatians", the 1888 controversy over righteousness by faith, right up to this present era with issues over the date 1844 for the commencement of the Investigative Judgement were basically over the roll and function of Ellen G White in relationship to scripture. The issue being for the most part as to whether we are to accept her as the final word on interpreting the Bible or whether we are free to differ with her.

Conference as a whole.

Even more significant was the pressure applied at the conference by leading conservative forces working through Washburn and Holmes. Both of these men were seething since the 1919 Bible Conference and were active in trying to discredit the leadership of the church centered in Washington. They tried to associate the leadership with the "higher critics" of the more liberal Protestant churches of the day and felt it their God-given duty to preserve the religion of the Seventh-day Adventist pioneers by purging out the corrupt influences. As mentioned, they, along with others, were writing letters which were freely circulated with the idea in mind of exposing and embarrassing the leadership of the church.

Holmes had previously been dismissed from church employment because he stole letters from the General Conference vault addressed to Prescott and Daniells from Ellen White. He had then used extracts from them to destroy the reputations of both men in the pamphlets he published.²⁶

In his We Have an Infallible Spirit of Prophecy tract -dated 1/4/1920- which was addressed to Washburn but widely circulated, Holmes claimed that although Ellen White had not learned at the great schools of the world, yet she had knowledge directly from God and as such was always accurate in any subject on which she wrote whether it be astronomy, geology, dietetics, theology, medicine, or history. He accused the leaders and teachers present at the 1919 Bible Conference of destroying

²⁶Gilbert Murray. Valentine, "W W Prescott: Seventh-Day Adventist Educator" (PHD. dissertation, Andrews University School of Graduate Studies, Aug 1982), 481.

confidence in her works.²⁷

Within a few days Washburn published his thirty six page tract , The Startling Omega and Its True Genealogy. In it he mentions that Washington College had become "a nest of Higher Criticism." He mentions students by name who nearly had their faith destroyed at the college and rejoices that Albertsworth, Lacey, Sorenson, and Field have been removed. He blames all the theological problems on Daniells and Prescott and claims that they along with all the other "higher critics" are the "Omega Heresy" that Ellen White had spoken of in 1904.²⁸

All of this was contributing towards a build up for the 1922 General Conference session in San Francisco. At this time both men circulated open letters to the delegates. Washburn's letter attacked Prescott and Daniells declaring that their "new theology" was part of the "Waggoner theology". It was also the "deadly heresy" and "Omega" apostasy that EGW had warned would come to the church. Because of this he challenged Daniells to meet him on this issue at the next General conference.²⁹

²⁷ Holmes, Infallible 5.

²⁸ Washburn, Omega 1,6.

²⁹"Personally I have nothing against Prof. Prescott. But I do know that many will agree with me that his influence is a menace to this denomination and that he is perpetuating the ruinous theories of Dr E J Waggoner, in part at least...the core, the root, the seed theory of all our modern Washington new thought, and Adventist new theology, that is the new doctrine of the Daily... The new doctrine of the Daily and the Prescott new theology... This "deadly heresy" will change the original truth, and it is a startling fact that the new Daily doctrine moves nearly all our prophetic dates, and opens the way for other theories that draw men forever away from all the message of 1844.

On page 53 this testimony further states: 'Living Temple contains the Alpha of

C.E.Holmes' letter was also circulated among the delegates. In it he lists twelve areas where he believes Daniells has gone against and undermined the counsel of Ellen White. He concludes with:

"I firmly believe that the deplorable conditions found in the church today are due largely to the course you have followed. In all seriousness I ask: Should men be leaders in our work year after year who neglect to follow God's counsel and persist in following their own ways." ³⁰

One can see how clearly Daniells and Prescott were at a disadvantage. Holmes and Washburn had an unrealistic understanding of the role and function of Ellen White. This being the case they did not have knowledge sufficient to match Prescott and Daniells who had developed their concepts by direct association with the

these theories. I knew that the Omega would follow in a little while, and I trembled for our people' ...are a few among many other startling indications that this awful prophecy is fulfilling in Washington today...the Omega will be of a most startling nature. The Omega has startled me and my friends beyond expression...because I have forever renounced the Waggoner theology, a part of which you are defending today. You were my true and faithful friend until the Waggoner theology of the Daily gripped you, and you were in the coils of the Omega... In my veins flows the blood of those who knew the Advent movement from its infancy. On my father's and mother's side, the Washburns and Butlers, not only father and mother, but both grandfathers and grandmothers were pioneer Seventh Day [sic] Adventists. I will by the grace of God go through with this people to the kingdom of God. You nor any committee can ever take away my credentials or stop my work. I stand just where my sturdy old warrior uncle, George I Butler stood. If he were to rise from the dead he would stand with me against you and Prescott. I know that he feared that you and those who were following the Waggoner and Prescott theology were leading the work over the precipice to ruin... I challenge investigation, not before a small committee, but before the whole General Conference... I am not at all afraid that the representatives of our people will turn me down or out for standing for the original message and the Spirit of Prophecy. You tried me before a small committee. I will gladly meet you before the whole General Conference..." Washburn, Open Letter, 23-34.

³⁰ Holmes to Daniels, May 1 1922, "Open Letter." 8, RG33; Inactive Sustentation files, J.S. Washburn Folder. Quoted in Bert Haloviak and Gary Land's paper "Ellen White and Doctrinal Conflict: Context of the 1919 Bible Conference". Spectrum Vol 12 No 4 31.

prophetess herself. However the views held by Holmes and Washburn were the prevailing views held by most of the church membership at the time. Perhaps the price was about to be paid for not informing the rank-and-file membership of what they knew to be the truth as they had expressed it at the 1919 Bible Conference.

Exactly what took place at the session is not known in detail as the minutes are not to be found in the General Conference archives. In fact the Daniells files from 1920 through to 1925 are strangely missing. There are available some references in letters written after the event by Spicer; but more informative still are the newspaper reports coming out of San Francisco. These show Daniells emotionally defending his leadership against the bitter attacks being made against him while holding a handful of documents which he claimed showed the charges were wrongfully laid. The San Francisco Bulletin reported:

William A. Spicer, former secretary, will succeed A G Daniels [sic] as President of the Seventh Day Adventist Church and Daniells will become secretary of the organization, an office which Spicer has held for the last twenty years. Spicer's election came as a compromise following a struggle between opposing factions of the church... Much criticism and bitter denunciation of 'dirty politics' followed by resolutions condemning 'all un-christian propaganda, vilification and false charges,' preceding the selection of the candidates [sic]." ³¹

Although we may never know all the details of what took place at the 1922 General Conference session, we do know that Washburn considered his open letter had indeed saved the church from "higher critics." ³² The newspapers seem to show Daniells greatly distressed and moved to tears withdrawing at last from the

³¹ The Bulletin (San Francisco), May 23, 1922, p.2.

³² Washburn to F.M.Wilcox Nov 27, 1931.

nomination for presidency and pledging to work for the church to the best of his ability. They seem to show Spicer reluctant to take over as his successor. Both men were close friends. However at the urging of the delegates he agreed, in order to attempt to bring unity. (See the newspaper accounts in Appendix "C") It would be doubtful if this move would entirely please the Washburn and Holmes camp as Spicer's ideas in regard to Ellen White were not too different from those of Daniells.³³

Part of the compromise to keep the unity of the church was the reversal of the roles of the two men. Daniells now operates as Secretary of the General Conference while Spicer is President. However it would seem that the removing of Daniells from the presidency was a turning point in the denomination. Daniells operates as Secretary only in name and begins to occupy himself in other areas such as the newly formed Ministerial Association, and writing. Possibly because of all the recent trouble, and the prevailing climate in the religious world of North America against liberal tendencies, neither Spicer or others seem to get into the contentious topics which had been so freely discussed at the 1919 Bible Conference. It would appear from Seventh-day Adventist publications, as previously shown, that for the next few decades as the Protestant Liberal/Fundamentalist controversy raged in other churches Seventh-day Adventists were being pushed in the direction of the Fundamentalists. Particularly is this true in the area of the inspiration of both EGW and the Bible. Bull and Lockhart summarise their convictions regarding this era of Seventh-day Adventist history in this manner:

³³ W A Spicer to L R Conradi, Nov 30, 1914. Here he explains to Conradi his convictions that there was need to put in the revised edition of *Great Controversy* an explanation of how the book was put together. He blames the bookmakers for not making enough changes in areas where he still feels the book needs improving.

"The crucial issue of the First World War and the 1920s was the Fundamentalist-modernist controversy. Many mainstream churches were divided, and smaller independent groups like the Adventists usually gave their support to the fundamentalist cause. In the nineteenth century, the primary concern had been to find a space and to stake out theological boundaries. At the dawn of the twentieth century, most religiously minded Americans felt compelled to take sides for or against evolution, biblical criticism, and secular liberalism. Adventists were no exception, and they placed themselves firmly in the Fundamentalist camp...But it would be wrong to equate this stabilization with an increase in Adventist intellectualism. Quite the reverse. The intellectually disciplined theological debates that had filled the pages of *The Review* now disappeared... They were also accepting new ideas, usually without arguing them out in the way their forbearers would have done. Adventists, like the fundamentalists with whom they now identified themselves, quietly accepted Trinitarianism: took a stronger line on inerrancy of the Bible; accepted, in line with the penal-substitutionary theory, that the cross was a place of atonement; and re-affirmed their belief in human perfectability in less mystical terms than had been current in the 1890s..."

"A misleading picture of Adventist history can be derived from concentrating solely on the changes that have taken place since the Second World War. It can appear that the central dynamic of Adventist development has been the move away from historic certainties toward accommodation with the mainstream of American religion. **But what many authors take to be historic Adventism is in fact the creation of the twentieth century- a synthesis that took place in the 1920s and remained dominant till the 1960s. It was, moreover, a synthesis that in itself represented an accommodation to the newly formed Fundamentalist movement.** (emphasis mine)³⁴

During the next few decades other factors would combine to cause conservative reactions: One such force was the great depression. History shows that in times of hardship or uncertainty society tends to go reactionary. The Christian Church tends to reflect its culture and this certainly was the case with Adventism.

The presidents who followed Daniels and Spicer tended to be more conservative. Possibly they felt a greater responsibility to lead the church and preserve it now that the prophetess was dead. Especially since other denominations were being eroded

³⁴ Bull and Lockhart, Seeking a Sanctuary 89-91.

by modernism. Historians generally note that the death of the founder of an organisation is followed by a period of consolidation in which the primary focus is not exploration of anything new or different to that which is generally held; rather it is one of solidification of the ideas that have already been in place and well accepted. Don McAdams, a Seventh-day Adventist historian, describes this regular occurrence the following way:

"It is the task of the second generation leaders to hold the movement together without the charisma and prestige of the founding fathers. Faced with the possibility of disintegration, the second generation leaders elevate the symbol of the movement on to a lofty pedestal and claim great virtue, wisdom and authority for the now dead founder. Nothing gives the second generation leaders more authority than to claim all wisdom for the founder and claim for themselves the exclusive right to interpret his legacy." ³⁵

It is possible also that they were still living closely in point of time to the criticisms of EGW made by men like A.T.Jones and J.H.Kellogg. Perhaps they saw how the church, having more recently escaped from pantheism, was now facing another attack from "higher criticism" which was undermining not only the Bible but also Ellen White. They could witness the eroding influences of "higher criticism" in the mainline churches and were determined not to allow this to come into the Seventh-day Adventist church. Gary Land describes the attitudes of church leaders towards Ellen White in the period just prior to and after her death as follows:

Besides criticizing the ideas of Jones and the Kellogg circle, church leaders over the next few years began to instruct readers through the pages of The Review about Ellen White's role in the church. Comparing Jones's criticism of Mrs White with "higher criticism of the Bible" implied equating

³⁵ Donald R. McAdams, "Shifting Views of Inspiration, Ellen G. White Studies in the 1970's", Spectrum Vol 10 Number 4, 27.

White's writings with the Bible. Church leaders fought against this implication; yet their fear that these testimonies might be taken lightly moved them, however unconsciously, toward regarding the statements of the Bible and those of Ellen White as of equal force. The protests that Seventh-day Adventists did not regard Ellen White's writings as **equal** to the Bible were many. In replying to Jones, The Review stated that "we do not place the Testimonies above the Bible." (emphasis mine in bold print)

To explain the phenomenon of this modern prophet more clearly, Daniel H Kress compared the work and message of Ellen White with that of John the Baptist. Other writers said much the same thing: that Ellen White only "magnifies the truths of the Bible" and confirms "believers in conclusions they had already reached from a study of the scripture." Francis M Wilcox played a significant role in defining the Adventist position on Ellen White. During his Review and Herald editorship of thirty-three years, he wrote many articles and editorials affirming the prophet's inspiration and role in the church. Wilcox argued that White served God the way, Samuel, Elijah, and John the Baptist did. She was a woman, he said, "whose work has been to point mankind to Christ, the Saviour of men, to lead them to search the scriptures of Truth with greater diligence.

Furthermore, her writings "**constitute a spiritual commentary upon the scripture, a divine illumination of the word.**"

Despite the protests against equating Mrs White's writings with the Bible, many statements implied otherwise- or said otherwise straight out. Roscoe Porter wrote that "the Testimonies sent are God's word." Many published statements admonished church members "**to study the written word and the spirit of prophecy...**"

Although these writers probably did not realise it, they implied by their arguments that the Bible alone is insufficient to guide the believer into all truth. In their effort to defend Ellen White's work from criticism, they began to emphasise her work to a degree considerably greater than in previous years. Although it is difficult to document precisely, the years after 1906- as reflected in the contents of *The Review*- show rapid increase not only in the number of articles about the spirit of prophecy but also in the number of times the magazine's writers referred to White for support of their arguments on theological issues of all kinds.

When Ellen White died in 1915, it appears that many church members wondered whether God would choose another prophet for His people. In her absence, Wilcox advised, the church should continue to follow the Bible and her writings.

Four years after her death, the debate, begun publicly by Alonzo T Jones in 1906, came to a close. In the the summer of 1919, the church called its leading ministers and college teachers together for a Bible conference... On the second day, however despite their apparent agreement in rejecting both the verbal inspiration and infallibility of Ellen White, the

participants backed off from taking any concerted action. Fearing that the membership would be shaken, they concluded that caution was advisable...as a result, the discussion remained essentially unknown...Thus the 1919 conference ended the public discussion that Jones had initiated. The debate closed ambiguously, however, and Jones' questions were left dangling, unsatisfactorily answered. Nevertheless, Adventist leaders affirmed their belief in Ellen White's prophetic gift and placed increasing emphasis on her writings. Although they made the *Testimonies* theoretically subordinate to the Bible, they also considered them indispensable to Seventh-day Adventists. **As a result, Ellen White continued to gain greater theological authority within the church.** (emphasis mine)³⁶

Herold Weiss has a similar comment:

After Ellen White died, her son W C White took over the production of her books, continuing to do what she had done before her death. Her own books had been compilations of paragraphs from testimonies, letters and articles; the only thing now missing was the approval of the final draft by Mrs White herself. But another very significant change took place as well. The demand for her authoritative word began to come from a new quarter. She had produced her books to meet the demands of the general reading public. Now they were being produced to meet the demands of a General Conference committee that had decided the church needed something about a particular subject, such as stewardship or parenting. Now others were handling the formal authority Mrs White had formerly employed for herself. Those who needed an objective authority had found one in her.

During the 1920s and the 1930s many of those who had worked with Mrs White in the production of her books were still alive. **But with the death of that generation the claims made on her behalf gained new heights.**" (Emphasis mine).³⁷

The discussions that had taken place on inspiration at the 1919 Bible Conference are for the next few decades almost buried and forgotten. It could be that those who knew the most on the subject were being intimidated into going quiet. Terrie Aamodt has recently printed a history of Walla Walla College and records the suppression of

³⁶ Gary Land, Adventism in America. (Grand Rapids, Mi: Eerdmans, 1986). 158-161.

³⁷ Herold Weiss, "Formative Authority, Yes; Cannonization, No," Spectrum Vol 16, Number 3. 9.

certain theological faculty who were viewed with suspicion simply because they had outside doctoral degrees. She shows how difficult it was for many to accept that the church may need to go outside its own ranks in order to get education. It is obvious from what she records that some fundamentalist minds dominated the thinking of others during this time. Particularly was this true regarding the subject of inspiration and the function and authority of Ellen White.³⁸

M.L.Andreason describes the attitudes of the ministry in 1942 in a letter to the General Conference as follows:

If my experience as a teacher in the Seminary may be taken as a criterion, I would say that a large number of our ministers have serious doubt as to the correctness of the views we hold on certain phases of the sanctuary. They believe, in a general way, that we are correct, but they are as fully assured that Ballengers views have never been fully met and that we cannot meet them. Not wishing to make the matter an issue, they simply decide that the question is not vital-- and thus the whole subject of the sanctuary is relegated, in their minds at least, to the background....**The ever present question of the position which Sister White should hold among us is a prolific cause of difficulty.** (Emphasis mine)³⁹

³⁸ Terrie Dopp Aamodt, in her book Bold Venture: A History of Walla Walla College. (Walla Walla, WA: Walla Walla College Publication. 1992). Has an extensive account of the trials of the theology faculty of the college in chapter 6 "Keeping the Faith". The suspicions raised against some men on the theological faculty simply because they had advanced doctoral degrees from outside universities shows a mind set against advanced education which is typical of many Fundamentalists of the day. Harold Bass, Frederick Schilling and William Landeen are interesting case studies. While we would hesitate to judge each case from such a distance yet it is interesting to note the mind set of one board member of the college Lemuel Esteb who said to Harold Bass. "Harold, if Mrs White had written that your black hat is white, it would be white to me". "Lem", I answered, "God gave me eyes to see things white and things black and things in between, and as long as I am normal I will not substitute the word of Mrs White or anyone else for what my eyes tell me. If I do not use the senses with which I am equipped, I cease to function as a man." 104.

³⁹M L. Andreason letter to J L McElhany and W H. Branson, December 25, 1942. Andrews University Heritage Room, Andreason file. 5.

Dr Richard Hammil in a recent interview stated that he was taught thought inspiration by O.Schilling while at Walla Walla at a time when verbal inspiration was commonly taught in the denomination. "Inerrancy was not discussed by Schilling; but everyone thought inerrancy was correct. However because of the troubles, teachers like Schilling were forced to 'clam up'. It was dangerous to teach thought inspiration during the 1930s. Although other issues dominated the scene at the time such as the Daily, Armageddon, and the identity of the king of the north. Verbal inspiration and inerrancy were the ideas commonly held."⁴⁰

Raymond C. Cottrell states "after the removal of Daniells from the General Conference presidency the church also moved away from his position on inspiration. The material that Ellen White had written on inspiration found in Selected Messages Vol.1, 15-21 was not available. For years the White estate would not release it. Not even when it was requested to be made available for printing in The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary Series. It was only in the late 1950s, Cottrell stated, that the manuscripts were finally released."⁴¹

Robert Olsen retired secretary of the Ellen White Estate states that "the two leaders who contributed heavily towards a Seventh-day Adventist view of verbal inspiration and inerrancy for EGW were S.N.Haskell and J.N.Loughborough, both well respected and living till the early 1920s. Each had experienced the days of EGW and

⁴⁰ Interview the writer had with Richard Hammill March 1993. He also stated the difficulty so many of our theology lecturers had in getting approval to take doctoral degrees in outside Universities. Most tended to get degrees in history or archaeology. Edward Heppenstall was one of the few to get a doctoral degree which involved theology. The actual degree was in the area of religious education.

⁴¹ Interview the writer had with Raymond C Cottrell, March 1993.

as such were looked upon as authorities. During the 1930s and 1940s there were many who did believe as did Daniells but they dared not raise their voices. In 1935, D.E. Robinson and W C White wanted to get a pamphlet out and tell the Seventh-day Adventist people the truth about the subject but it was squashed by the incumbent administration because it was so different from what was generally believed."⁴²

It is amazing indeed that Daniells was removed partly for his views on the subject of inspiration which in reality were very similar to that of Ellen Whites. She had written the following on this vital subject:

"The Bible is not given to us in grand superhuman language. Jesus, in order to reach man where he is, took humanity. The Bible must be given in the language of men. Everything that is human is imperfect. Different meanings are expressed by the same word; there is not one word for each distinct idea. The Bible was given for practical purposes...

The Bible is written by inspired men, but it is not God's mode of thought and expression. It is that of humanity. God as a writer is not represented. Men will often say such an expression is not like God. But God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. The writers of the Bible were God's penman, not His pen. Look at the different writers.

It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts. But the words receive the impress of the individual mind. The divine mind is diffused. The divine mind and will is combined with the human mind and will; thus the utterances of the man are the word of God."⁴³

(Tragically this material does not become generally available till Selected Messages is printed in 1958. And more is released with the printing of the third

⁴² Interview the writer had with Robert Olsen, March 1993.

⁴³ Ellen G White, Selected Messages vol 1. (Wash, DC: Review and Herald, 1958), 20-21.

volume in 1980.) Although some significant material regarding her views on inspiration are found in the introduction to The Great Controversy and as such have long been freely available; yet up until recent years appear to have gone relatively unnoticed.⁴⁴

Her views on this subject are very important for Seventh-day Adventists to take careful note. She places herself neither in the camp of the liberals or fundamentalists of her day. She likens the process of inspiration to that of the incarnation of Jesus; that is God condescends to reveal His thoughts through fallible human minds and methods of expression. She has also a beautiful balance between faith and reason and never tries to depreciate one against the other. We are still to use our minds; while we must realise that there will still be some things in God's word which will always remain a mystery to us. Roy Graham states some important concepts as he summarises her attitudes toward the Bible, particularly as it relates to her own function.

⁴⁴ Ellen G White, in The Great Controversy. (Mountain View, Cal: Pacific Press Pub Assn, 1950), states in the introduction .v-vi. "The Bible points to God as its author; yet it was written by human hands; and in the varied style of its different books it presents the characteristics of the several writers...The Ten commandments were spoken by God Himself, and were written by His own hand. They are of divine, and not human composition. But the Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine and the human. Such a union existed in the nature of Christ, who was the Son of God and the Son of man. Thus it is true of the Bible, as it was of Christ, that 'the word was made flesh and dwelt among us.' (John 1:14).

God has been pleased to communicate His truth to the world by human agencies, and He Himself, by His Holy Spirit, qualified men and enabled them to do this work. He guided the mind in the selection of what to speak and what to write. The treasure was entrusted to earthen vessels, yet it is, nonetheless, from heaven. The testimony is conveyed through the imperfect expression of human language, yet it is the testimony of God..."

"The early SDAs were sensitive to some of the problems created by their acceptance of EGW as one who received visions, and thus, through this means, what she and they considered as counsel from God. They had to deal especially with the question, How can you maintain your avowed position of 'the Bible and the Bible alone' while you give EGW's writings a significant place in your faith?

Their response was to reaffirm their stand on 'the Bible and the Bible alone as our rule of faith and duty,' and then to emphasise the following points. First, the EGW writings were not placed above the Scriptures but were in fact to be tested by them. 'Every Christian, declared James White 'should pray fervently to be aided by the Holy Spirit in searching the Scriptures for the whole truth, and for his whole duty. He is not at liberty to turn from them to learn his duty through any of the gifts.' ...Third, there was no intention that spiritual gifts, and thus in their evaluation the writings of EGW, should take the place of initiative and personal Bible study...

A careful study of her writings indicates that throughout her life she maintained this position. The Bible is supreme. 'The Holy Scriptures are to be accepted as an authoritative, infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the revealer of doctrine, and the test of experience...the spirit was not given -nor can it ever be bestowed- to supersede the Bible; she declared, 'for the Scriptures explicitly state that the word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested.'...⁴⁵

Jerry Hoyle states that the subject of the inspiration of the Bible is not one that has had a lot of treatment in Adventist circles over the years. Apart from Ellen White and G.I. Butler no one else seems to have paid much attention to it. The inspiration of the Bible has always been assumed; but never spelt out in detail. Possibly because as a subject it has tended to be "overshadowed by other more pressing issues."⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Roy Graham, E.G. White Co-Founder of the SDA Church (American Uni Studies. Peter Lang, NY: 1985) 140-151, The attitude of Ellen White towards this subject is well summarised by Roy Graham in these pages.

⁴⁶ Jerry Hoyle, "An Historical Study Of The Development Of The Doctrine Of Inspiration In The Seventh-Day Adventist Church. 1869 -1966". This project towards an M.A. Degree Loma Linda Uni; La Sierra Campus May 1973 is a worthwhile document to read as he shows how over our history we have not given much attention to this subject. Because of this have often produced conflicting positions in

In 1926 a significant book appeared in which for the first time Seventh-day Adventism began to give a treatment of the subject in detail. The book, edited by Benjamin L. House, included contributions by H.S. Bunch, J.N. Anderson, Meade McGuire, C.A. Burman, E.H. Emmerson and others who were part of the General Conference Education Department. This publication was entitled Analytical Studies in Bible Doctrines for SDA Colleges. A Course in Biblical Theology. It was sponsored by the General Conference education Department and was destined to have a moulding effect upon the thinking of large numbers of Seventh-day Adventist ministers in the twentieth century.⁴⁷

House rejects the idea of dictation inspiration as well as the other idea of thought inspiration (the view of Ellen White as referred to previously in this manuscript) and settles on what he terms verbal inspiration. By this he means,

"This view, sometimes called verbal inspiration holds that all scripture is inspired, 2 Tim.3:16, that the selection of the very words of scripture in the original languages was overruled by the Holy Spirit... (He then quotes 'Great Doctrines of the Bible' by William Evans.) We may therefore, safely say that in a very real sense the words as well as the thoughts have been given...that infallible guidance was given to those who wrote it, so as to preserve them free from error in the statement of facts...that God in the fullest sense is responsible for every word..."⁴⁸

our publications. On page 42 he states that we did not have an official statement until 1966 when in our SDA Encyclopedia we rejected verbal inspiration and upheld thought inspiration.

⁴⁷ B.L. House [ed.], Bible doctrines for Seventh-day Adventist Colleges (Washington, DC: General Conference Dept of Education, 1926).

⁴⁸ Ibid., 66-67.

In the 1928 edition he actually says that Seventh-day Adventists do not believe in thought inspiration.⁴⁹

There is not much to go on by way of denominational material in print during this time and teachers in Colleges do not usually print their class lectures; however one gets the impression from the little in print and the comments by older retired pastors today that the position taken by House was generally accepted.⁵⁰

Ministry, the Magazine for Adventist clergy, ran one article in 1931 under the monthly feature "Valuable Quotations from Reliable Sources" which was printed without any comment from the editors.

(The Bible) is a book of divine information concerning the way of salvation, and without a flaw or error in the documents as written by the inspiration of the Spirit. Not only is every word of the document true, but there is also no mistake in the historical data offered nor in any point of divine human knowledge.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Ibid., 1928 edit 71.

⁵⁰ Olsen interview. He stated that he graduated from PUC in 1943 and Walter Rae in 1944. Both were taught verbal inspiration and inerrancy by W.R.French who was also an Arian and had great influence. Not until the 1960s did Robert Olsen begin to understand the subject of inspiration differently.

⁵¹ Ministry (Wash, DC: General Conf Min Assn June 1931)

F.M.Wilcox also has a statement which echoes the conviction of many regarding EGW. "The writings of Ellen White constitutes a great commentary on the scriptures... they are inspired commentaries, motivated by the promptings of the Holy Spirit, and this places them in a separate and distinct class, far above all other commentaries." R and H June 9 1946 p62.

No doubt for many years the influence of Haskell's Bible Handbook which clearly reveals a verbal view of inspiration was also having an effect.

The Influence Of M.L. Andreason.

M.L.Andreason was undoubtably a pre-eminent scholar in Adventism during the 1930s and 1940s. As an author of some 15 books, a Bible scholar and a devout follower of the writings of Ellen White he had a profound effect on the thinking of many Seventh-day Adventist ministers during this time period and even on into the 1950s and 1960s. Although he had a deep conviction that Seventh-day Adventists were to be truly Protestant in their approach to developing theology from the Bible only, yet his writings show no evidence that he had correctly understood how Ellen Whites inspiration had operated.⁵²

If he had stayed with the Bible only, as he professed, he would, perhaps, never have developed his final-generation theology, which was based, to a large degree, upon a statement found in Christ Object Lessons.⁵³ This along with other Ellen White

⁵² M.L. Andreason, in his book A Faith To Live By. (Wash, DC: Review and Herald, 1943), talks affirmingly of his visit with EGW and how he was able to spend many days reading the original manuscripts yet nowhere does he show evidence of his knowledge of her borrowings or how her book keepers helped her. For example he says; "She wrote nothing that was cheap or questionable, but only the purest of wheat, thoroughly winnowed. Mature counsel, earnest exhortation, pure morality, sound theology, correct and authoritative information, are all imparted in correct and beautiful English. Viewed purely as literary productions apart from any divine or spiritual gift, Mrs White's writings deserve and are given a place among the best religious literature." 268.

In fact knowing what we now know of the way her writings were put together by way of borrowing from others and the part played by Marion Davis and others in producing the final product it sounds a little ironic to read what he said in a chapel talk at Loma Linda 30/11/1948. (To be found in the MLA file in the Andrews Uni Heritage room. After reading Desire of Ages, he declared "I found there a beauty of expression that caught my attention, and I said to myself, 'I do not see how Sister White could ever have written that; she was a woman of but little education, and hence would be unable to produce such a work. I said to myself again and again 'she never wrote that'."

⁵³ E.G.White. Christ Object Lessons. (Wash, DC: Review and Herald Pub Assn, 1941). On page 69 she states "Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be

statements gave him his final-generation theology. He developed this new theology in the 1930s emphasising four main points:

1. The cleansing of the soul temple is an experience available in the antitypical Day of Atonement since 1844.
2. Ellen White indicates in her book The Great Controversy, in page 614 how the final generation is to go through the "Time of Trouble" without an intercessor.
3. Ellen White states in Christ Object Lessons page 69 that Christ will not come until His character is fully reflected in His people.
4. Rev 14:12 shows how at the end there will be a final demonstration to the universe of a people who will keep the commandments of God.⁵⁴ In his book The Sanctuary Service he develops this theme further as he shows the process of how he believes the final generation of Christians may become victorious over each sin in their turn until they are ready for translation.⁵⁵

perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own." Standing as it does alone as I have quoted it this statement can give the impression as though Christ is waiting for a sinless generation to be produced before He can come again to gather up His people. However a reading of the context shows that sinless perfection is not the subject being discussed rather the producing in the life the "fruits of the Spirit".

⁵⁴ These four points are taken from my class notes made in a lecture given by Dr George Knight, Jan 1991.

⁵⁵ M.L. Andreason, in his book The Sanctuary Service. (Wash, DC: Review and Herald, 1947), 302 states "Many a man who has been a slave to the tobacco habit has gained the victory over the habit...On that point he is sanctified. As he has been victorious over one besetment, so he is to become victorious over every sin. When

Regarding the nature of Christ, as to whether He had a nature like Adam before, or after, the fall. It appears that Andreason had no comment in his publications during the 1930', 1940s and early 1950s. Possibly this is because the sinful nature of Christ, in respect to being like Adam after the fall and thus being like us today, in a poor sinful state, was an assumed tenet and thus was not an issue. It was not to become a contentious issue until the late 1950s with the printing of the book Questions on Doctrine [QOD].⁵⁶

In his volume The Book of Hebrews Andreason divides the atonement up into three phases.

1. The perfect life lived on earth by Jesus.
2. Gethsemane and Calvary where Jesus became our sin bearer.

the work is completed, when he has gained the victory over pride, ambition, love of the world -over all evil- he is ready for translation...

Thus it shall be with the last generation of men living on the earth. Through them God's final demonstration of what he can do with humanity will be given. He will take the weakest of the weak, those bearing the sins of their forefathers, and in them show the power of God. They will be subjected to every temptation, but will not yield. They will demonstrate that it is possible to live without sin-..."

This teaching seems to have its roots in Adventism from the 1890s when A.T.Jones along with Anna Rice [claiming to be a prophetess]*spoke of the final generation theology. In the years 1899 and 1900 MLA was a student of A.T.Jones at Battle Creek according to his autobiographical manuscript quoted in Without Fear or Favour by Virginia Steinweg, (Wash, DC: Review and Herald 1979) 29, Andreason states his regard towards Jones: "I immediately fastened myself to him. While not impressed with Uriah Smith who was one who "knew all things, and that others knew very little if anything."

⁵⁶ Further evidence on this is found that Ralph Larson in his book The Word Was Made Flesh: One Hundred Years of Adventist Christology 1852-1952. (Cherry Valley, CA: Cherrystone Press, 1986), has listed all the statements he can find on SDA comments regarding the subject but apparently cannot find any from Andreason as there are none listed..

3. The final demonstration when other saints show that they can achieve what Jesus achieved with the same help. He claimed that this final phase of the atonement was in the act of being carried on now in the Sanctuary above and that it was up to each Christian to cleanse their own soul temple so that Jesus could come.⁵⁷

There are many voices within Seventh-day Adventism which would say that his line of reasoning had many weaknesses, for example,

1. An inadequate and non-biblical view of the nature of sin.
2. Reading too much into some Ellen White statements while ignoring the context and other statements which seem to say something different.
3. Ignoring the fact that the Bible has little to say on the subject while giving too much pre-eminence to Ellen White.

One cannot help but wonder whether Andreason would have gone the same route in his eschatology if he had been aware of what the 1919 Bible Conference was saying about the role and function of Ellen White. But during the years of his greatest influence little was being said in seventh-day Adventism which reflected the ideas expressed at the 1919 Bible Conference.

Seventh-day Adventism and the Evangelical Conferences.

While Seventh-day Adventism was pushed away from its more natural

⁵⁷ From M.L.Andrean, in his book The Book of Hebrews (Wash, DC: Review and Herald, 1948), 59-60. I have paraphrased the thoughts.

Evangelical stance by the political and religious climate, of the 1920s, towards Fundamentalist positions, particularly with regard to the inspiration of the Bible and Ellen White, and was content to remain there for the next few decades as other more pressing subjects occupied their attention.⁵⁸ However, at the same time there were forces at work within and without the church which would eventually cause the church to come back to a more balanced approach to the subject of inspiration as expressed by Ellen White and the 1919 Bible Conference presenters. These forces are outlined as follows:

1. **World War Two and the Great Depression had ended.** The resulting effect was that society itself became more open and progressive in an era of economic revitalisation. After the war was a time when the United States became increasingly active in world affairs and began to move into the role of being the world's policeman. At such a time the Seventh-day Adventist Church also became more conscious of global issues, rejoicing in the new freedom gained since the end of the war, and finding good success in countries where America's influence was strong.

2. **With communications and travel greatly enhanced Seventh-day Adventists became more global conscious.** Furthermore non-Americans began to take prominent positions in leadership. One significant appointment was that of

⁵⁸ Adventism in America, Ch 6 is written by Keld J. Reynolds and entitled "The Church under Stress, 1931-1960." Reynolds states, "Whereas the troubles of earlier days had been primarily internal, the ones the denomination faced after 1930 were largely external. International economic depression, a truly worldwide war, and a rapidly changing postwar world strained Seventh-day Adventism to the utmost....Although not all problems were resolved, the events of these years broadened the Seventh-day Adventist conception of mission in a more humanitarian direction and to some degree broke down its sectarian exclusiveness." 170.

W.R.Beach to the position of Secretary of the General Conference. His influence during the time of the presidency of R.R.Fighur (1954-1966) is generally looked upon as developing an era of openness and progress.⁵⁹ The appointment of R.A.Anderson, an Australian, to the position of Secretary of the General Conference Ministerial Association would also prove to be of great significance. Anderson's influence was felt also when he was able to get his good friend Edward Heppenstall, an Englishman, to a denominational teaching position in the United States.⁶⁰

3. A powerful influence in extricating the church out of its fundamentalist mould was the accreditation of Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions. (Fundamentalism is usually suspicious of higher education). Since the 1930s a "war" had raged over whether the church should apply for accreditation. To a large degree the issue involved the "College of Medical Evangelists" in California (later to become Loma Linda University). The question arose as to whether the church should seek accreditation for this institution and train doctors of medicine with fully recognised degrees? Only then could the church have a reputable University with many different schools of medicine. With the denominational health message described as the "right arm of the message", the church's commitment to overseas medical evangelism, together with the counsel of EGW, regarding higher education with favour, it was

⁵⁹ On this point there was general agreement among those who I interviewed in March 1993.

⁶⁰ Interview with Mrs R.A. Anderson. March 1993. who stated that they were good friends, and tended to agree theologically and spent a lot of time together.

inevitable that those who were in favour of accreditation would win.⁶¹ Once it was agreed that the college would seek accreditation, it naturally followed that they would need to have students who would come from other accredited church institutions. These students in turn would have to be taught by teachers who were also well qualified. And so the door was opened for higher education. The Seventh-day Adventist church began to make contact with the wider world of learning. This was to prove to be a point of great significance. The founding of The Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary was also a giant step forward as it meant that the church would have better education for its ministry.

Up until the presidency of R.R. Fighur it was usual to find that anyone who had a doctoral degree from a non Seventh-day Adventist institution, and who taught Seventh-day Adventist students theology, generally had the degree in an area like Archaeology (e.g. S.H.Horn) or Semitic languages (e.g. W.G.C.Murdoch). In the 1940s R.F.Cottrell, while teaching Bible at the denomination's Pacific Union College, applied 5 times for permission to study towards a doctorate but was refused and told that his Master's degree was sufficient for church teaching needs.⁶² Edward Heppenstall was one of the first to get a doctorate in religious education from a non Seventh-day Adventist institution.

4. The influence of Edward Heppenstall. As Andreason had been the giant in Seventh-day Adventist theology in the 1940s and 1950s; so Edward Heppenstall

⁶¹ Terrie AAmoldt, in Bold Venture ch 6 has some reference to the struggle over accreditation during this period and the suspicions against anyone who had an outside doctoral degree.

⁶² Interview with R.F.Cottrell 21/3/93.

became the dominant figure at the Seminary and in the theological world of Adventism from the mid-1950s onwards. His ideas in some significant areas of theology differed from those of Andreason. During my interview with him I was conscious that he was 92 years old and suffering from Alzheimer's disease. However I did find him on an exceptionally good day. His wife, who is 12 years younger, still has an excellent, clear mind and responded well to many of my questions. She was exceptionally helpful, and willing to supplement her husband's answers to my questions.

⁶³ Like Andreason, Heppenstall authored many significant books such as :

Our High Priest (1972)

Salvation Unlimited (1974) and

The Man Who Is God (1977)

In these volumes, as well as in his teaching at the Seminary, Heppenstall was aware that he was taking different positions from those of Andreason, especially in areas such as:

The sinless nature of Christ.

The impossibility of sinless perfectionism being found amongst God's people just before the return of Jesus.

During the interview he repeatedly stated, "Andreason was overboard on this. Sinless perfectionism! The idea just does not hold up. We can't be sinless before Christ comes. A man coming to Christ just a week or two before Jesus returns can't do it. His relationship to Christ, that's what matters. We must be total in our relationship to Christ. If you commit yourself to Christ you are saved. If a man dies

⁶³ Interview with Dr and Mrs Heppenstall at their home March 1993.

and has committed himself to Christ he will be saved even if he has not kept Seventh-day Adventist doctrines. Some of the great preachers of today are genuine Christians." He kept repeating "Christ has got to be central, He is the supreme person."

Judged from his writings, Heppenstall appears to have a more realistic approach to the use of the writings of Ellen White. (see Appendix "D") He summarises his convictions in the following words,

Ellen White calls upon us to make sure that all the truths we hold are firmly established upon the scriptures. Therefore we deplore the idea that anything else should have prior authority over the Bible. Let her writings be our guide but not our jailer, our shield but not our straightjacket. The scriptures comprise God's final word to us⁶⁴

Heppenstall had the advantage over Andreason in that he lived to see more evidence of how Ellen White actually did her work before he wrote this article.

5. **The 1952 Bible Conference.** With the Second World War now finished the leaders of the church were anxious to know if the effects of the war and the isolation had made some differences to the beliefs of our people. This was to be the first Bible Conference held since 1919. Some also suspect it was Branson's intention as President of the General Conference to use this conference to settle the Armageddon

⁶⁴ Edward Heppenstall's article "The Inspired Witness of Ellen White" From Adventist Heritage Centre, James White Library. Andrews University. The unpublished article is undated, however the fact that it introduces him as now retired as well as the fact that he has written it to answer the plagiarism charges currently being made prominent would suggest that he is writing it during the early 1980s when Walter Rae is making allegations against Ellen Whites borrowings of the writings of others.

issue which had been causing some division. An additional reason was, no doubt, that the church felt a need to respond to the perceived threat of Weiland and Short's submissions on Righteousness by Faith. The fact that Seventh-day Adventists could once again hold a Bible Conference where ideas could be openly shared was a step forward.

Compared with the one in 1919, this conference put greater emphasis on the doctrines of salvation and the nature and work of God's remnant and less emphasis on the specifics of prophetic interpretations of history...

The General Conference afterward appointed a standing committee for biblical study and research [sic]- "to encourage, organise and coordinate...Biblical exegesis and research and then to function as a body of counsel to give guidance to those who in any part of the world field make what to them appears to be significant discoveries of truth."⁶⁵

The subject regarding the inspiration and authority of EGW does not seem to have been of great priority as far as this conference was concerned. The topic was covered by D.E.Rebok who, while denying the verbal inspiration and infallibility of EGW, yet is obviously unaware of the type of material and discussions that had taken place at the 1919 Bible Conference.⁶⁶

6. The Printing of the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary Series. Seven volumes of a Bible commentary series, comprising some seven thousand pages, were produced by the denomination between 1953 and 1957. It was the largest single publishing project ever conducted in the history of the church. The set received

⁶⁵ Gary Land. Adventism in America. 184.

⁶⁶ Our Firm Foundation. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald. 1953.) Article "The Spirit of Prophecy in the Remnant Church" by D.E.Rebok.

surprising acceptance from a wide range of Seventh-day Adventists. It was a step forward in that it was prepared to recognise that in some areas there was room for differences of opinion. One such example was the fact that there could be an acknowledgement of more than one view regarding the nature of Armageddon.

The Evangelical Conferences:

Meanwhile in the wider Protestant world significant changes were also taking place. Evangelicalism; Fundamentalism; Liberalism?

Definitions are often a problem. The desire to categorize is always appealing. What do these three terms mean when we apply them to the Protestant world? Broad statements are needed while allowing for the fact that not every person or church can be described so succinctly. For the purposes of this paper I see:

Liberalism as an attempt to account for the Bible as the product of merely human sources.

Fundamentalism as an attempt to account for the Bible as the product of purely Divine sources.

Evangelicalism as an attempt to account for the Bible as the product of both human and Divine sources.

Many would claim that evangelical theology goes right back to the early Christian church or at least the Protestant Reformation and that it was only in the late nineteenth century under the pressure caused in reaction to the liberalising

tendencies of some Protestants that Fundamentalism arose with a defensive attitude.⁶⁷

John R. Rice, a leading fundamentalist, describes fundamentalism as:

...a vigorous defense of the faith, active soul winning, great New Testament type churches going abroad to save multitudes, having fervent love for all God's people and earnestly avoiding compromise in doctrine or yoking up with unbelievers...all true Fundamentalists today affirm the inerrancy of the Bible and the premillennial return of Christ, and deny all biological evolution...⁶⁸

He also goes on to describe that its two most distinguishing features are a militant defense of the faith and soul winning. George Marsden says of fundamentalists:

They were conservative evangelicals, dedicated to soul winning and conscious of a need for militancy for defending the faith...almost all nineteenth-century American Protestants had been evangelical, that is, part of a coalition reflecting a merger of Pietists and Reformed heritages and growing out of the eighteenth and nineteenth century awakenings in America... All Fundamentalists wanted to preserve this nineteenth century heritage, and so all Fundamentalists were evangelicals... (on the other hand)...many who still called themselves, evangelicals were liberals or modernists who had abandoned most of the distinctive emphases of the awakening; so the term evangelical had lost its usefulness. Fundamentalists nonetheless thought of themselves simply as preserving the evangelical heritage...**A Fundamentalist is ready to stand up and fight for the faith...Central to being a Fundamentalist is perceiving oneself to be in the midst of religious war...Spiritually enlightened Christians can tell who the enemy is. In such a war, there can be no compromise... Fundamentalists universally see the war as primarily a**

⁶⁷ Ferguson and Wright. New dictionary of Theology. The article "Evangelical Theology" has an excellent discussion on this point.

⁶⁸ Donald Drayton, and Robert K. Johnston, The variety of American Evangelicalism. (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP. 1991), 22-23. Quote from Rice on this point.

war over the Bible. To this extent, they would agree with outside observers who claim that fundamentalism is, in its distinctive aspect, a modern movement. Though Fundamentalists see this battle for the Bible as recent, **they insist that their inerrancy doctrine is the historic position of the church.**

For Fundamentalists, the battle for the Bible almost always has two fronts. They are fighting against modern interpretations of the Bible that they see are destroying most American civilization, which they see as founded on the Bible...The way of getting at this point that has become virtually universal for Fundamentalists is to assert that the Bible is 'inerrant'. For Fundamentalists, this means that the Bible not only is an infallible authority in matters of faith and practise, but also is **accurate in all its historical and scientific assertions.** (Emphasis mine).⁶⁹

Marsden talks further of the two points which would traditionally separate Fundamentalists from the rest of the protestant world; one would be inerrancy of scripture and the other the premillennial hope of the return of Jesus. Talking about inerrancy of scripture as a test of faith was rare before the late nineteenth century, though most earlier Protestants assumed something like it.

Fundamentalism in North America had relative success and strength up until the "Scopes Trial," of 1925 when nationally they were discredited as the evidence given at the trial by both sides was made public. "After that year, fundamentalism steadily lost its national influence in America and began to retreat into separatist sectarian minorities which became increasingly isolated from the mainstream of society."⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Ibid. 23-27.

⁷⁰ An excellent account of this is found in Steve Daily's How Readest Thou. (M.A.Thesis. Loma Linda Uni, 1982), 30-31.

Because of this setback, the late 1920s saw the Fundamentalist movement reorganising itself. Their influence was curtailed and discredited inside the mainline denominations. How could they gain in strength? On this point there were two schools of thought. One group said:

...that they should simply continue to champion their cause within the major denominations, building individual Fundamentalist congregations that could resist liberal influences of denominational leadership. Other Fundamentalists increasingly concluded that the movement should form its own separate institutions, which could be freed from corrupting entanglements with the major denominations. Dispensationalists especially were inclined in this separatists direction, since one of the dispensationalists teachings was that the major churches of this age would become apostate. Many, though not all, dispensationalists carried this teaching to the conclusion that Christians must separate themselves from any such apostasy..⁷¹

However many of the same forces, as previously mentioned, which were to bring Adventism out of its fundamentalist mode were also at work in the Protestant world in general. The SDA Encyclopedia states:

"To a considerable extent, Fundamentalists have ignored or rejected the valid findings of Biblical scholarship, a feature of the movement deplored by its more- well informed leaders. Furthermore, there seems to be a predisposition, especially among the more radical fundamentalist groups, to take an obscurantist, irrational attitude on various matters...

Since about 1940 a group of fundamentalist scholars has arisen calling for a more enlightened attitude towards modern culture, especially in the areas of science and sound Biblical scholarship. **Those sympathetic to this trend call themselves Evangelicals...**" [Emphasis mine]⁷²

⁷¹ Drayton and Johnston. American Evangelicalism. 28.

⁷² SDA Encyclopedia. (Wash, DC: Review and Herald.1966), Article "Fundamentalism".

Among some of the more important catalysts to cause this new evangelical movement were in the 1950s were:

1. The influence of Billy Graham.

He started out in the fundamentalist camp but gradually moved away to work with a more broad based group of churches.

2. Carl F. Henry and his work as founding editor of Christianity Today.

This publication would be the most influential magazine in the new evangelical movement.

3. The founding of Fuller Theological Seminary.

This was destined to become the catalyst of mission for the evangelical world.

Early Evangelicals attempted to distance themselves from the extremes of the Fundamentalists and they did this in many areas such as:

- (a) opposing liberal theologies.
- (b) de-emphasising some of the strict prohibitions of the fundamentalist moral code.
- (c) abandoning separatism.
- (d) dropping dispensationalism, while remaining premillennialists.

However there was one important issue they could not agree on which was to cause serious rifts. Drayton and Johnston state:

"The question of Biblical inerrancy soon split neo-evangelicals themselves into two major camps. Progressives thought inerrancy too

narrow a way to define Biblical authority; more fundamentalistic neo-evangelicals insisted on inerrancy as a test of faith. Fuller Theological Seminary, the leading neo- evangelical educational centre, split over this question and fell into the hands of the progressives. More fundamentalistic neo-evangelicals, usually supported by Graham and Christianity Today, took the lead in promoting the inerrancy test for as much of the evangelicalism as possible. Most influential in these campaigns was Harold Lindsell, editor of Christianity Today from 1968 to 1978, whose Battle For The Bible, published in 1976, was the Uncle Tom's Cabin of the inerrancy movement...fundamentalist influences remained strong." (emphasis mine).⁷³

In summary, how shall we describe an evangelical? George Marsden describes evangelicalism in the following way:

While fundamentalism has become a fairly precise designation for a particular type of Protestant militant, it should be apparent that evangelicalism describes a much more diverse coalition. Roughly speaking, evangelicalism today includes any Christians traditional enough to affirm the basic beliefs of the nineteenth-century evangelical consensus. The essential evangelical beliefs include

- (1) The Reformation doctrine of the final authority of the Bible
- (2) The real historical character of God's saving work recorded in Scripture
- (3) Salvation to eternal life based on the redemptive work of Christ
- (4) The importance of evangelism and missions, and
- (5) The importance of a spiritually transformed life.⁷⁴

There can be no doubt that all Seventh-day Adventists could subscribe to the above definition. However it is the contention of this paper that Seventh-day Adventists belong more with the progressive evangelicals particularly in the area of

⁷³ Drayton and Johnston. American Evangelicalism. 30-31.

⁷⁴ George M. Marsden, Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. 1991). 4.

Worth reading under this topic is an excellent article by A. Patrick. "An Adventist and an Evangelical in Australia"? The case of Ellen White in Australia. Lucas n.12. Dec 1991. He suggests that EGW was indeed an evangelical because of her positions on primitive Christianity, the Scriptures, the Cross, righteousness by faith, and activism.

Scriptural inerrancy. Russell Staples of Andrews University, discusses this question at length and arrives at a yes and no answer while noting that:

An extremely high value of Scripture is held by both, but evangelicalism tends to accept verbal inspiration and inerrancy -although perhaps a more flexible view is held by some. Adventists adhere to a more dynamic view...Evangelicals appear to be moving away from dispensationalist fundamentalism, and the differences between Adventist and evangelical eschatology appear to be narrower than previously. Both are faced with the challenge of maintaining a sense of expectancy...⁷⁵

One cannot help coming to the conclusion when studying this subject that Seventh-day Adventism, while it lives in the same world as the rest of the Christian church, also faces similar issues and pressures. As other Christian churches respond, so does the Seventh-day Adventist Church; although usually a little later in time. Today there are many militant fundamentalist Seventh-day Adventists who are quick to point out the changes that have taken place in Seventh-day Adventism since the end of World War Two. However, they seem unaware of the changes that also took place in the 1920's. Bull and Lockhart are quick to point this out:

The changes that have taken place in Adventism since the second world war have been far more self conscious than those at the start of the century. In consequence these developments have received a disproportionate amount of attention. But in fact, the changes have been less dramatic than those of the earlier period, involving a dilution rather than a transformation of Adventist belief...

A misleading picture of Adventist history can be derived from concentrating solely on the changes that have taken place since the second world war. It can appear that the central dynamic of Adventist development has been the move away from historic certainties toward accommodation with the mainstream American religion. **But what many authors take to be historic Adventism is in fact a creation of the twentieth century** -a synthesis that took place in the 1920s and remained dominant until the

⁷⁵ Drayton and Johnston. American Evangelicalism 68.

1960s. It was, moreover, a synthesis that in itself represented an accommodation to the newly formed fundamentalist movement...[Emphasis mine]

...Adventist theology has developed in parallel with that of the mainstream. It was at its most distinctive during a period of great diversity; it became fundamentalist in the era of fundamentalism; and it softened with the rise of evangelicalism. Throughout this process Adventist theology has served as a barrier between the church and its opponents. The nature of the competition has changed -from rival sects to liberal Christianity to secular humanism- and Adventist theology has adjusted accordingly. But the changes have served to maintain the distance between Adventism and the most threatening idealogical formations of the day...⁷⁶

With changes taking place in both Evangelical Protestantism and Seventh-day Adventism it is not surprising that when a meeting between both groups did take place in the mid-1950s there would be many surprises coming from both sides as to the amount of agreement to be found. These meetings took place between leaders from both sides commencing in the North American spring of 1955 and continued until the summer of 1956. Those present were:

T.E.Unrah, Conference President of East Pennsylvania who made the initial contact;

D.G.Barnhouse; a Presbyterian pastor and editor of an evangelical magazine called Eternity.

W.R.Martin; a Southern Baptist research writer on American cults and member of the editorial staff of Eternity. Martin was in the process of writing a book about Adventists and had a desire to be accurate and fair in what he published.

Le Roy E. Froom, author and former director of the Seventh-day Adventist

⁷⁶ Bull and Lockhart. Seeking a Sanctuary 90-91.

General Conference Ministerial Association and editor of Ministry for 22 years.

Walter E. Read, Seventh-day Adventist General Conference field secretary and chairman of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference Biblical Research Committee.

Roy A. Anderson, experienced evangelist and currently director of the Seventh-day Adventist Ministerial Association and editor of Ministry magazine.

After the conference Barnhouse wrote in his magazine *Eternity* :

In the past two years several evangelical leaders have come to a new attitude towards the Seventh-day Adventist church. The change is a remarkable one since it consists in moving the Seventh-day Adventists, in our opinion, out of the list of anti-christian and non Christian cults into the group of those who are brethren in Christ; although they must still be classified, in our opinion, as holding two or three unorthodox and in one case peculiar doctrines.⁷⁷

It was obvious that until now their information about Adventists had come from those who had left the church such as D.M.Canright, E.S.Ballenger, L.R.Conradi, and E.B.Jones.

Martin and Barnhouse presented forty-eight questions to the Seventh-day Adventist leaders at the conference. In the answers that they were giving Martin and Barnhouse could see that they were upholding:

⁷⁷ D.G.Barnhouse, " Are Seventh-day Adventist Christians"? Eternity Magazine.
Sept
1956. 6.

The gospel and not legalism;

Salvation only through Christ, and not by observing the Sabbath.

The Seventh-day Adventist stand on assurance before God was solely on a basis

of Christ's imputed righteousness;

Sinless perfection is not possible this side of heaven.

The sinless nature of Christ and His full deity.

Keld J. Reynolds notes:

These 1955-56 dialogues were of considerable historical importance, because they forced the Adventists to sort out their beliefs: a first basic category that they shared with conservative Christians of all ages, a second category in which Adventists shared with some Christian bodies but not with others, and a third category representing Seventh-day Adventists alone and justifying their separate denominational existence. The dialogues drew from the participating Evangelicals an unreserved acknowledgement that Adventists who believed as those with whom they had talked were indeed Christians.⁷⁸

While noting some areas of agreement and disagreement Barnhouse records that in regard to the role and function of Ellen White;

...the Adventist leadership proclaims that the writings of Ellen G. White, the great counsellor of the Adventist movement, are not on a parity with the Scripture. While the Adventist church claims to have received great blessing from the ministry of Mrs White, they admit her writings are not infallible, but in all fairness do revere her writings as special counsels from God to their movement.⁷⁹

Both sides were aware that what they were doing was destined to cause controversy within their own ranks; but decided to go ahead regardless and tell their people what had taken place. Martin and Barnhouse noted that there were some

⁷⁸ Gary Land, Adventism in America 186.

⁷⁹ Barnhouse, Eternity, Sept 1956. 7.

Adventist books still being sold in Seventh-day Adventist book shops which were saying some things different to what they were being told. Froom, Anderson, and Read replied that this was because the church does give some measure of freedom of expression and that what they had shared was held by all except a "lunatic fringe". This was a serious misrepresentation. Although the answers given were generally held by Seventh-day Adventists.⁸⁰ Yet it was true that there were a significant number of Seventh-day Adventists who did not hold to the positions that were presented. This became evident when MLA first became aware of the printing of the answers in the book entitled Questions on Doctrine. This book, published by the Ministerial Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, was the official recording of the answers given to the questions. Andreason had not been invited to join the consulting group, or even given a copy of the draft of the intended book as were some 250 scholars and administrators. There were some reasons for this:

1. He was 83 years of age and well into retirement.
2. He had recently written a Sabbath School pamphlet on the book of Isaiah which had not been published. He was upset and demanded compensation for his efforts. This was granted and he was paid \$3,000. However, it did leave some hard feelings between him and some of the leaders of the church.

It was, possibly, perceived that he would not have agreed to the answers. He

⁸⁰ A draft copy of the 55 questions was sent to 250 leaders in North America and around the world. "A committee of fourteen with Rueben R. Figuhr, President of the General conference, as chairman supervised the distribution of these documents and an evaluation of the replies, which demonstrated a substantial consensus." Raymond F. Cottrell, unpublished manuscript. "Questions On Doctrine: A Historical-Critical Evaluation". 9.

was not theologically in harmony with the rest of the consulting group and so was put on the sideline. He would have been one of those described as being on the "lunatic fringe".

The bypassing of Andreason proved to be a great mistake. He printed a series of tracts entitled "Letters to the Churches" in which he claimed that the leaders of the church, in order to please the Evangelicals, had sold the church out. The two main theological areas of his concern were:

1. **The nature of Christ.** He claimed the church leaders had departed from the historic position as making Christ just like ourselves; that is, as one who had a sinful moral nature.
2. **The atonement.** Questions on Doctrine was saying it took place at the cross and Christ was thereafter applying for us the benefits in the heavenly sanctuary. MLA maintained that the atonement was a process still going on in the heavenly sanctuary and it depended upon a final generation to bring it to completion.

After quoting from Ellen White, Andreason stated, "The Spirit of Prophecy makes it clear that Christ was not exempt from the temptations and passions that afflict men. Whoever accepts the new theology must reject The Testimonies. There is no other choice." ⁸¹

The whole basis on which Andreason argued was:

The Seventh-day Adventist church had a body of doctrine which could not be altered because it had been authenticated by the writings of Ellen White.

⁸¹ M.L.Andreason, Letters to the Churches. Series A. No 1. 16.

Part of this body of doctrine teaches that Christ came to earth to be just like us with sinful passions. Furthermore as He overcame them, so can His followers, and there must be a final demonstration of this victorious living before Jesus can return.

There will be an apostasy from the truth in the last days as Ellen White foretold, and his church's swing towards Evangelicalism was that apostasy. These apostates, he continued, would downgrade the sanctuary and Ellen White and must be removed from the church.

Naturally the question may be asked, "Did the Seventh-day Adventist church really change its teachings in these areas?" Some evangelicals who were angry with Martin and Barnhouse for saying "yes" said "no this church still teaches legalism and is a cult." R.R. Fighur was saying "no, the church has still maintained its distinctive theology and has not compromised." Andreason was saying "yes, the church has changed and this is apostasy."

The truth was "yes", the church had changed some of its teachings; but these changes had been going on over a longer time period than many realised. Martin and Barnhouse had been relying on old sources going back to D.N. Canright who accused Seventh-day Adventists of legalism. There was some truth to that allegation then. However, since 1888, with the help of Ellen White, the church had projected a more Christ centered theology. Other evangelical Christians not aware of this had continued to rely on Canright. The church had changed from its ideas on the nature of Christ, sinless perfectionism, and the atonement due largely to the teachings of

Heppenstall. A true understanding of Seventh-day Adventism allows for this growth in understanding which has been going on throughout its history.⁸² Although Froom, Anderson and Read were anxious to impress the evangelicals it was not with the idea of watering down the faith; but rather that they might open the door to bring the Seventh-day Adventist message to the evangelical world.⁸³ Unfortunately, Barnhouse and Martin, it would seem, belonged to those evangelicals who had a fundamentalist approach to inspiration and this clouded their appreciation of Ellen White.⁸⁴

Once again, in theological debates, the roll of Ellen White would come to the fore. There was a vast difference between the answers as given in Questions on Doctrine about her role and function in contrast to what Andreason was fighting to defend. Froom, Anderson, Reid, and Heppenstall were much closer to the position taken by Daniells and Prescott at the 1919 Bible Conference. On the other hand Andreason seems to be much closer to the view Washburn and Holmes held in their tracts written against Daniells and Prescott.

⁸² Graeme S. Bradford, "Advancing in the Light," *Record, March 5, 1994, 6-7

⁸³ Interview with Mrs R.A.Anderson March 1993 at Loma Linda. She expressed the idea that her husband intended that QOD would become a missionary tool. She also said that later on MLA apologised to R.A.A. for the trouble he had caused him.

⁸⁴ Evidence for this statement comes from the fact that in his book [which he writes later on] he dwells heavily upon the fact that she borrows so much from other authors and dwells also upon her errors. He shows no evidence for having a view of the inspiration of prophets in harmony with what we find in the Scriptures themselves as I have outlined in my other paper "Ellen White Update". The reader is invited to compare my evidence from Scripture with how Martin writes in his book The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1960), ch 4 "Ellen White and the Spirit Of Prophecy."

It would seem that there has been for a long while within Seventh-day Adventism two distinctly different approaches in understanding theology and Ellen White:

The Evangelical line comes through the 1919 Bible Conference presenters like Daniel and Prescott who overlap with, and continue on through, Froom. Froom feels convicted that Daniells, after his defeat in 1922, put his mantle on him as the one who would restore Evangelicalism. In the introduction to his book Movement of Destiny he states:

Back in the spring of 1930 Arthur G. Daniels, for more than twenty years president of the General Conference, told me he believed that, at a later time I should undertake a thorough survey of the entire plan of redemption -its principles, provisions, and divine Personalities- as they unfolded to our view as a movement... ...Elder Daniels recognised the serious problems involved, and sensed almost prophetically certain difficulties that would confront. (sic) He knew that time would be required for certain theological wounds to heal, and for attitudes to modify on the part of some. Possibly it would be necessary to wait until certain individuals had dropped out of action, before the needed portrayal could wisely be brought forth. He likewise envisioned the vast toil and time involved. He pressed me to lay long-range plans to that end, and never to give up. Such was his solemn charge in 1930. ⁸⁵

In the context of these quotes Froom is talking of the righteousness by faith issues which commenced in the late 19th century in Seventh-day Adventism. However, that he should also absorb from Daniells, a man whom he so much admired, a true concept of how Ellen Whites inspiration worked, should also be reasonably expected. In fact he seems to show evidence of this in his book when he labors the tenet that the Bible is our only rule of faith and practise and we must not let Ellen White come to the fore ahead of the Bible.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ LeRoy E. Froom. Movement of Destiny. (Wash, DC: Review and Herald. 1971), 17-18.

⁸⁶ Ibid. ch 5. "The Bible- Sole Rule of Faith and Practice".

When the writer was in the General Conference archives (March 1993) doing research on this topic, the assistant archivist Bert Haloviak went to some cartons of papers which had belonged to Froom (they had been placed there many years ago by his son Frenton) and found some additional notes on the 1919 Bible Conference which had been overlooked. They appear to be some notes, taken while recording the talk that Daniells gave at the conference, by some unknown scribe. Haloviak feels they were taken by Prescott and later typed by a secretary. It would seem that the typist cannot always understand the words and so at times there are blank spaces. It is possible to take the Bible Conference minutes and place them by the side of these notes and see they have been following the same address. The title at the top is "Use of Spirit of Prophecy" (see Appendix"E"). It does show that there was an overlapping from Daniells to Froom regarding knowledge of how the Ellen Whites writings were to be used. It appears that although the 1919 minutes were lost, or suppressed, yet Froom was aware of what was said. This he reflects in his book Movement of Destiny to some extent and in the book Questions on Doctrine to which he contributed. It would be hard to believe that Daniells had not taken him aside on many occasions and explained to him of how he, along with others, had associated with Ellen White in the preparation of her books for publication. Most likely he and many others had some problems as to how this knowledge should be shared, given the mood of the church and the high expectancy placed upon the writings by many sincere Christians.

It seems that every time there is a theological controversy in Seventh-day Adventism the basic issue of the use of Ellen Whites writings comes to the fore. Until it is settled there can be no progress towards unity. The issues raised in the

objections against Questions on Doctrine are still with us today. However, in the 1970's some momentous events occurred to help provide some solutions.

Eventually Martin became painfully aware that there were serious divisions within Seventh-day Adventism between Fundamentalists and Evangelicals. In retrospect he wrote,

After I started doing the research, I saw definite division in Adventist theology. There were the people who really were believers and held to the foundations of the Gospel. Then there were those who were downright legalists -worshippers of Ellen G. White- who had exalted her beyond the role that she ever claimed for herself, and, in effect were the loud voice that the evangelical world was always hearing...⁸⁷

No one should be surprised that Seventh-day Adventism should have two wings: Evangelicals and Fundamentalists, for all Christian churches face this situation to varying degrees. However in the case of Seventh-day Adventism it seems that there has been throughout the history of the church this division partly over the the function and authority of the writings of Ellen White. It seems that there has consistently been a smaller group who have a more enlightened understanding but have not felt free to share what they know with the larger body of believers. This has always put them at a disadvantage when confronting the larger more conservative group because no one wants to be accused of doubting the inspiration of EGW. For this reason they do not feel free to openly say all that they know to be the truth on the matter. Because of this, the church has been content to drift on in this manner up until the 1970s. Then events arose to force the hands of the leaders to confront again similar issues addressed at the 1919 Bible Conference.

⁸⁷ Douglas Hackelman, "Interview with Walter Martin," Adventist Currents July 1983. 17.

Adventist Historians Come of Age.

The accreditation of Seventh-day Adventist universities and colleges, led to trained historians in denominational ranks, for the first time. In the early 1970s they were beginning to do their work. Don McAdams, as quoted earlier, talks of how the first generation of a religious movement get the group established, the task of the second generation is to hold it together, but then he talks of the role of the third generation in this manner:

... inevitably, a third generation arises- a generation that has been reared in what is no longer a young and struggling movement, but a well-established and apparently indestructible party, nation or church. Secure in the stability and strength of the organization, the third generation will commence the critical examination of the movement's origin. If this paradigm is even a little accurate, by 1970 the time had come for Adventists to conduct a critical examination of Ellen White's spiritual gift.⁸⁸

McAdams explains how these historians were educated in the 1950s and 1960s unaware of the long history of criticisms in the past of Ellen White and her writings, both in her lifetime and after her death; or even of the events of the 1919 Bible Conference. They were at first acting as true believers trying to reconcile what appeared to be historical inaccuracies in her writings. From their own study they became aware of her borrowings. This problem seemed destined for resurrection as one which was going to continue to haunt Adventism. The problem was was not going to go away. McAdams continued,

William S. Peterson's article, "A Textual and Historical Study of Ellen White's Account of the French Revolution" was the first article to examine critically Ellen White's sources...He concluded that all were anti-Catholic and anti-Democratic, strong on moral fervor and weak on factual evidence...she used them carelessly, sometimes simply misreading them,

⁸⁸ McAdams. "Shifting Views of Inspiration". Spectrum Vol 10 No 4. 27.

other times exaggerating them, and occasionally leaving out crucial facts, thereby distorting the significance of the event...

The ironic aftermath to the entire Peterson affair was an article by Ron Graybill, a research assistant at the White Estate,...Graybill undermined crucial aspects of Peterson's hypothesis and made irrelevant many of the criticisms put forth by John Wood and others. A study of the notes left by Clarence C. Crisler, Ellen White's secretary when the 1911 revision of *The Great Controversy* was being prepared disclosed that the literary source for the chapter on the French Revolution was not a collection of historians, whether good ones or poor ones, but **primarily one writer, Uriah Smith**. (Emphasis mine). His *Thoughts on Daniel and Revelation* was the basic source for the chapter. One discovers, wrote Graybill, 'that Ellen White ...used nothing from Scott, Gleig, Theirs, or Alison that Smith did not have. Every time Smith deleted material, she deleted the same material.' So it was not Ellen White who selected poor historians and misread or distorted the evidence found in them. It was Uriah Smith!" ⁸⁹

This was a new era in the study of Adventist history. In the past the authorities on Ellen White such as Loughborough, W.C.White, F.D.Nichol and Arthur White had not been trained historians. They tended to be more apologists than historians. When Arthur White tried to discredit the findings of the 1919 Bible Conference minutes it was Gilbert Valentine who defended the findings. His response to Arthur White showed up the differences between an apologist, who was a family member, and that of being an objective historian. The fact that W.C.White and Arthur White were descendants of Ellen White only added to their subjectivity. Gary Land noted a further important development when he wrote,

The next major contribution came from a historian of medicine and science, Ronald L. Numbers, whose Prophetess of Health: a study of Ellen G. White re-examined the development of Mrs White as a health reformer. In his preface, Numbers noticed that he was parting from traditional Adventist scholarship in that he did not presuppose inspiration or ignore witnesses who rejected Ellen White as inspired...First he argued that Ellen White drew upon the ideas of health reformers such as James C. Jackson and R.T.Trall, although she had consistently denied any relationship of that

⁸⁹ Ibid. 29-31

sort. Second he pointed out that Ellen White had changed her ideas on whether an Adventist should consult physicians, don, 'reform' clothing, or adopt a two meal a day plan among other matters. Her historic function, he concluded, had been to make a religion out of 'health reform. Even before its publication, Numbers' book aroused a storm of controversy...⁹⁰

Following Number's publication, McAdams researched parts of Ellen Whites book The Great Controversy. He recalls his experiences in the following manner:

During the summer of 1973, while reading letters and documents in the White Estate on the history of the Adventist publishing work, I became acquainted with several Ellen White manuscript fragments that appeared to be portions of the first half of the 1888 The Great Controversy... The longest manuscript... turned out to be the rough draft for the half chapter on John Huss...

...I was now able to present in a revised paper in one column James A. Wylie's account of Huss from the History of Protestantism, in a second column Ellen White's rough draft, and in a third column her account as published in the Great Controversy....

What did the evidence prove?

...Ellen White was not just borrowing paragraphs here and there that she ran across in her reading, but in fact following the historians page after page, leaving out much material, but using their sequence... The hand-written manuscript on John Huss follows the historian so closely that it does not even seem to have gone through an intermediary stage, but rather from the historians printed page to Mrs White's manuscript, including historical errors and moral exhortations...

Study of the Huss manuscript also revealed that Mrs White's literary assistant, Miss Marion Davis, not only improved Mrs White's English usage but also played a very significant role in deleting a large amount of original material dealing with the spiritual significance of events and adding additional material from Wylie.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Gary Land, "From Apologetics to History: The Professionalization of Adventist Historians". Spectrum Vol 4. Number 10. 93-94. See also an excellent summary account in "The Historian As Heretic" by Jonathan Butler. Spectrum Vol 23. Number 2. 43- 64. Here Butler outlines the fierce opposition encountered by Ronald Numbers and others as they tried to objectively uncover the work of Ellen White from history. In the end they were somewhat vindicated by the discovery of the 1919 Bible Conference minutes and even Numbers' own father [who had previously been ashamed of his son] after having read them was reconciled as to what his son had been trying to do.

⁹¹ McAdams. Shifting Views. 34.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to record comprehensively the work of all Seventh-day Adventists historians as they revised the early history of Seventh-day Adventism. Some significant work was done by Jonathan Butler, associate professor of church history at Loma Linda University who produced an important paper "The World of Ellen G. White and the End of the World" published in Spectrum.

Butler suggested that Ellen White's understanding of Bible prophecy about last day events was a reflection of her knowledge of religious currents in nineteenth century America. Implicit, but not explicit, in his article was the conclusion that Ellen White's apocalyptic views were not based only on visions and need to be revised by contemporary Adventists.⁹²

The reader who wishes to pursue this subject further should read the articles by

⁹² Ibid, 38. See also Butler's article "The World of E.G.White And the End of the World", Spectrum vol 10, Number 2. where he states "Within her own lifetime, Mrs White allowed for the conditional nature of prophecy. Christ might have come 'long ere this', she remarked. He might have come in the civil war era when slavery was the sign of a failing democracy...He might have come about 1888 when a beleaguered Adventist minority in Tennessee chain gangs and jails indicated America's doom and the world's demise. In both cases, the prophetess spoke eschatologically with one eye on the morning newspaper....This continual reapplication of Adventism of new times and places was vital to her prophetic ministry, and remains absolutely essential to the life of the movement since her time...

...The prophetess stimulated this interactive process in her own time. It would be only sadly ironic if her writings were now used to stultify the creative process they once stimulated...

...The Adventist prophetess did not look forward to another decade for the end to materialize. Her own decade held all the ingredients of the Apocalypse. In our time, Adventists embody the spirit of Ellen White's message by preserving her sense of urgency...An Apocalyptic people- to remain Adventist - must prophecy the end of the present world, not a past era or a remotely future one...By insisting on only the "signs of the times" of an earlier Adventism, one may actually weaken belief in an imminent end in our time...

Since Ellen White provided an eschatological perspective for her own time, in her spirit it is now up to us to provide one for our time."

Raymond F. Cottrell maintains that during this period the church leadership and the White Estate were given six opportunities, at various times, to face up to the evidence and handle it in a manner which would not cause serious disruption. However, these opportunities were not taken.⁹⁴ The openness of the Fighur administration had been replaced by a more conservative reactionary administration.⁹⁵

It was during this period when the White Estate was responding to the trained historians that a church pastor began to discover the borrowings of Ellen White. Walter Rea, pastor of the Church at Long Beach, California discovered that not only had Ellen White borrowed to get material for The Great Controversy but also the

⁹³ Spectrum "Where are Historians Taking the Church"? Vol 10 .Number 3. and A "New Look at the Old Days: Adventist History comes of Age". Vol 18. Number 3. A recent article by Jonathan Butler "The Historian As Heretic" also gives a concise summary of the progress made by Seventh-day Adventist historians who eventually find that the discussions recorded at the 1919 Bible Conference are facing the same questions that they are pondering. Butler shows the difficult times faced by the historians. Some of them were treated so poorly that they left they church. Spectrum Vol 23, Number 2.

⁹⁴ Raymond F. Cottrell. unpublished manuscript: Architects of Crisis; A decade of Obscurantism. p18-21.

⁹⁵ "Elder Pierson graduated from southern Junior College in 1933 ...In 1936 he responded to a call to service overseas...but his lifetime of service overseas proved to be a severe handicap when he returned to the United States as President of the General Conference...For most of his life out of touch with the church in North America he was not aware of, and experienced considerable difficulty in understanding and relating to, changes that had taken place during his absence...he considered it his duty to restore to the status quo ante 1936. Ibid. 23. "During the time of Fighur scholars and administrators could talk openly and freely about their convictions. But that all changed when R.H. Pierson became General conference President" Interview with Raymond F. Cottrell March 1993. Gary Land has also an account of this in detail and is worth consulting; Adventism in America. 225-228.

other books in the Conflict of the Ages series. Having been taught at college the verbal and inerrant view of inspiration, this devout follower of Ellen Whites writings was seriously disturbed. Several times he reported his findings to the White Estate and each time he was assured that they would follow it up and make sure that the subject was handled openly and honestly. When it appeared to him that this was not happening as promised he began to take matters into his own hands and went public on the issue.⁹⁶

The effect of what he revealed was to devastate many in Adventism. Eventually the General Conference President, Neal C. Wilson, wrote in the Adventist Review saying,

"...in her writing Ellen White used sources more extensively than we have heretofore been aware of or recognized."⁹⁷

This was some six years after the discovery of the 1919 Bible conference minutes by Dr F. Yost which were read, surprisingly, by few Adventists laity and administrators alike. If the message of those minutes had been taken seriously, it could have, no doubt, saved the church much heartache, division, and thousands of laity and clergy from leaving the church. Alden Thompson summarises this important era in the following way;

As the church moved through the decade of the 1960s, the church's

⁹⁶ Walter Rea gives his account of his pilgrimage and experiences in his book The White Lie. (Turlock, CA: M and R Publications, 1982).

⁹⁷ Article by Neal Wilson, "This I Believe About Ellen G.White" Adventist Review, March 20, 1980. 8.

emphasis on education was actually laying the foundation for the avalanche of the 70s. Scholars trained in the humanities and the sciences began to turn their attention to the writings of Ellen White. Similarly, a growing cadre of biblical scholars were beginning to use modern methods of analysis in the study of the Bible.

Well-intentioned but frightened church administrators attempted to stem the tide with the Bible Conference of 1974, a conference which assiduously avoided inviting the new generation of scholars who were actually grappling with the text of the scripture. Ironically, the very year in which the new Bible Conference was held, the minutes of the 1919 Bible Conference were discovered, though they were not published until 1979. Critical analysis of Ellen White's use of historical sources (Peterson, 1970) and her relationship to 19th century health reformers (Numbers 1976) were merely forerunners for the more violent presentation of Ellen White's use of sources by Walter Rae.

With remarkable alacrity **the White Estate was turned to the very methods condemned in the Bible Conference of 1974 as the best means of defending Ellen White.** Sadly some still do not see the incongruity of dealing openly with the Ellen White evidence while refusing to do the same with Scripture. (Emphasis mine)⁹⁸

Thompson's article reflects some of the current debate going on within Seventh-day Adventism today. The debate continues between many scholars belonging to the Andrews University Society for Biblical Studies, to which the larger number of Seventh-day Adventist scholars belong, and the Adventist Theological Society (ATS) which most Adventist scholars refuse to join. Specifically, the debate asks the question; are we free to look at the historical conditioning of the Bible texts? While some ATS members deny in theory verbal inspiration; yet in practise, act according to that premise. And certainly uphold inerrancy.⁹⁹ This debate, we have

⁹⁸ Alden Thompson, unpublished paper presented to the NPUC Social Science and Religion Teachers April 1983 entitled "A Church in Controversy: An Historical Perspective".

⁹⁹ This would seem to be the impression given in their book Issues in Revelation and Inspiration, Frank Holbrook and Leo Van Dolson, edits., (Berrien Springs, MI: ATS Soc Pub. 1992. See for example F.M. Hasel's article "Authority and Trustworthiness of Scripture") 211.

seen, has a long history in Seventh-day Adventism. It certainly was being discussed in the 1919 Bible Conference.

As Thompson has correctly pointed out, the White Estate is being forced to see the work of Ellen White in the area of her culture and the historical conditioning effects upon her work. While this is happening, on another front the ATS is fighting to stop Seventh-day Adventism from approaching the Scripture in the same manner. Nowhere was this approach to Ellen White writings by the White Estate more apparent than in the International Prophetic Guidance Workshop sponsored by the White Estate in Washington D.C. April 11-12, 1982.

The International Prophetic Guidance Workshop.

This workshop was sponsored by the Trustees of the E.G.White Estate to help work through a response to all the new data which was coming to notice through the historians of the church and the challenges of Walter Rae. Space would forbid the detailed accounting of the nature of the presentations at that conference and the discussions that took place. However, Appendix "F" is a collection of summary material along with a paper presented by Robert Olsen on inerrancy. With so much material now available to challenge the traditional understanding of Ellen Whites work, particularly as held by Fundamentalist Seventh-day Adventism, this workshop represented a high point in the church's attempt to come to grip honestly with the new information. The audio tapes reveal frank discussion among leaders in the White Estate regarding the borrowings of Ellen White and her mistakes in the area of history, science, and theology.¹⁰⁰ It was agreed that this material did not negate her

¹⁰⁰ International Prophetic Guidance Workshop audio tapes available from the EGW Research Centre, Avondale College, Cooranbong, NSW 2265, Australia.

inspiration; but would certainly effect her function and authority. It was also agreed that this material should be shared with the church membership at large.¹⁰¹

Tragically this was not to be. As with the situation in 1919 it was felt that the Seventh-day Adventist church members would not be able to adjust to the new information which was so different to what they were accustomed to hearing. From Australia two representatives were sent to the workshop. Upon their return they agreed to share this information by means of articles through the church's weekly paper The Australasian Record. However this was not to be, as the leadership of the church in Australia insisted it would be harmful to church members. Attempts to share the information gained at the workshop eventually caused one of the representatives to lose his position as Curator of the E.G.White Research Centre.¹⁰²

Where are we today in Seventh-day Adventism?

Recently one leading Seventh-day Adventist administrator, upon reading the 1919 Bible Conference minutes, said "those fellows are just where we are today."

¹⁰¹ International Prophetic Guidance Workshop paper presented by Roger W.Coon Entitled "Continuing Education of Church Members and Providing Bases of Confidence." Available from the White Research Centre. Some of the points he stresses are that most Seventh-day Adventists have a seriously impaired view of how inspiration works and that we need to admit our mistakes in the past regarding the function of EGWs inspiration.

¹⁰² See letter K.S.Parmenter [President of the Australasian Division of Seventh-day Adventists] to Arthur Patrick, April 29, 1982. Available from the Seventh-day Adventist Church's South Pacific Division Archives, 148 Fox Valley Road Wahroonga, NSW 2076. Under section personal letters from the author. "We would not advise you to send the update section or the personal perspectives section of the material to The Record. You may just wish to keep it in your personal files."

See also letters from A.N.Patrick to R.W.Taylor enclosed in Appendix "H" where he pleads for the need to bring to the Seventh-day Adventist people in the South Pacific area a clearer perception of the role and function of Ellen Whites prophetic ministry.

This observation was certainly true. Their problems are still our problems. The inspiration of Ellen White is not so much under question as is the nature and function of her authority. Also in question is, how prophetic inspiration actually functions? These are questions that will not go away. They are questions which also have implications as to how we understand the inspiration of the Bible.

It should be obvious from the reading of this paper that there have always been two schools of thought in Seventh-day Adventism. On the one hand we have Evangelicals like the Daniells/Prescott group who at the 1919 Bible Conference express themselves so freely. They are opposed by Fundamentalists such as the Holmes/Washburn group who eventually succeed in removing Daniels from the presidency and usher in a period where no one could express themselves freely about the issue of inspiration, function and authority of Ellen White. However, recent scholarship has resurrected the issue once more in the 1970s. At stake is how Seventh-day Adventists should use Ellen Whites writings. Is Seventh-day Adventism truly a Protestant church who recognise the Bible as their sole authority in matters of doctrine? Are church members free to hold some positions different to Ellen White in their understanding of the Scripture?

There are many divisive voices inside Adventism today. Some cry out that in the 1950s the church went into apostasy when it printed Questions on Doctrine and moved away from some traditional Seventh-day Adventist positions. Such a one is Dr Ralph Larson, who states, "We consider historic Adventism as pre-1957"¹⁰³

¹⁰³ Ralph Larson, "Issues: the Real Issue, the Side Issues and the Pseudo Issues". Unpublished and undated response to NAD book Issues. Russell Standish also takes a similar position in The Remnant Herald, June 1993, No5. Under the title

Part of the purpose of this paper is to show that the Seventh-day Adventist Church received a set back in the 1920s when it succumbed to the influences that were operating in the Protestant Fundamentalist world. However, when a more healthy approach to education came in the late 1940s the church began to correct itself towards a more Evangelical stance with the openness of the 1950s. In this they reflected more the original Seventh-day Adventists who above all else wanted openness and honesty. They also reflected Ellen White who said,

The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people, is not a proof that our ideas are infallible. Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation.¹⁰⁴

After the 1920s diversion into Fundamentalism it was the EGW's commitment to education that led to accreditation of the church's educational institutions. Part of the fruitage that influenced the church to come back more on course towards an Evangelical stance particularly in the area of inspiration. In fact the material which EGW left the church, particularly in regards to how her inspiration works, could have spared the church from this diversion. One must ask:

Why was this material not made available until, 1958 in Selected Messages volume 1 and more later on in 1980 as found in Selected Messages volume 3?

"Historic Truth Number 27". He claims that "The SDA truth was upheld in general prior to 1956. Since then many truths have been destroyed."

¹⁰⁴ E.G.White, Counsels to Writers and Editors. (Nashville, TN: Southern Pub, 1946), 35. The reader is encouraged to read the counsels given in pages 28-54 of this book. Also the writer's article in The Record March 1993. "Increasing Light".

Why has not the letter that W.C.White wrote to S.N.Haskell and endorsed by Ellen White been made freely available? In this letter are set out some of her limitations.¹⁰⁵

Why have Seventh-day Adventists not been shown the letter that W.W.Prescott wrote to W.C.White where he complains that our people were not being told the truth about how EGW books were being put together?¹⁰⁶

Why are the custodians of Ellen Whites writings namely, The White Estate, to this very day not making a concerted effort to educate the Seventh-day Adventist people in harmony with the light of recent research regarding Ellen whites writings. (Certainly A.L.White must bear some responsibility for failure in the past to educate the church correctly. If he had only told church members and leaders what his father knew and wrote it would have been sufficient. Hindsight would tell us it was not wise to have a family member in charge of the White Estate for so many years. He was an apologist and not a trained historian).

It may be that well meaning men have over the years taken the line of least resistance and felt it unwise to tell church members all the facts. Perhaps, for the

¹⁰⁵ Letter W.C.White to S.N.Haskell, Oct 31, 1912. In this letter W.C.White sets how that his mother is not an authority on history etc. The letter is particularly valuable in that it is endorsed by EGW.

¹⁰⁶ Letter W.W.Prescott to W.C.White, April 6, 1915. "The way your mother's writings have been handled and the false impression concerning them which is still fostered among the people have brought great perplexity and trial to me. It seems to me that what amounts to deception, though probably not intentional, has been practised in making some of her books, and that no serious effort has been made to disabuse the minds of the people of what was known to be their wrong view concerning her writings. But it is no use to go into these matters. I have talked with you for years about them, but it brings no change. I think however that we are drifting towards a crisis which will come sooner or later and perhaps sooner."

most part, the church has not been deliberately deceived by dishonest men. But in failing to communicate the truth regarding Ellen Whites writings to the membership they have by default caused irreparable damage in the minds of many sincere Seventh-day Adventist people in regards to her ministry. Such an example may be seen by way of the reaction of Rene Noorbergen when he complains that the White Estate did not give him correct information when he came to them for material to use in his book Prophet of Destiny. See appendix "H". As it was in Seventh-day Adventism in 1922 with the demise of Daniells and others so it was again in the early 1980s. Some who were well informed in regards to how her inspiration operated were perceived to be out of harmony with the teachings of Ellen White and suffered accordingly. Subsequent research and publications were to show that many of these people were better informed than their accusers. However, how can one explain their convictions regarding her inspiration in a few sentences and correctly inform people who have held incorrect views for most of their lives.

In a chapel talk at Loma Linda M. L. Andreason said;

"Never say that because someone disagrees with you that he does not believe the Testimonies. He may not believe your interpretation of them, but he may believe them as fully as you do, and have a more balanced view" ¹⁰⁷

Failure to have a correct understanding of the role and function of Ellen White has caused large numbers to leave the Seventh-day Adventist church. Many others, while still remaining in the church, have become nominal Adventists. At the moment in the South Pacific Division of Seventh-day Adventists there is absolute confusion

¹⁰⁷ Chapel talk at Loma Linda University 30/11/1948 by MLA. To be found in the MLA file at the Heritage Centre, Andrews University, Michigan, U.S.A.

over this subject.¹⁰⁸

Although there are many good books coming off denominational presses which reflect this recent research yet few are read by the average church member.¹⁰⁹ And so to this day the average Seventh-day Adventist is scarcely aware of what has been learnt over the last decade and as such have a more Fundamentalist approach to the subject of inspiration of the Bible and Ellen White. Many within the church would have sympathy with the position stated by Russell Standish when he declares;

"The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy are without error in their original manuscripts".¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ "Ellen G. White And Contemporary Adventism In The South Pacific Division." Eleanor M. Scale. Unpublished paper presented to the 1989 year end Executive Committee of the SPD. In this she shows that of those involved in her survey of 1721 people:

21% of the youth still believe that EGW writings are equal to the Bible.
45% of the youth still believe that EGW writings can be used to prove doctrines.
50% of the youth still feel that EGW cannot be mistaken when speaking in the area of History, Prophecy and Theology. This number rises to 66% for the over 66 age group.

She goes on to conclude "These people are at risk if they become aware of difficulties and are unable to discuss their problems with mature members or ministers. Perhaps as church leaders, we should accept a portion of the responsibility for some of the problems that still exist in this area. Whether consciously or unconsciously many have, at times, made claims for and demands on Ellen White's writings that far exceed those made on the writings of Bible Prophets."

¹⁰⁹ Books such as: Martin Webber, Some Call it Heresy. (Hagerstown, Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1985) ch 15 "A Nonprophet Organization?" Tim Crosby, Is Your God Real? (Hagerstown, Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1988). George W. Reid, A Sound of Trumpets. (Hagerstown, Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1982) George E. Rice, Luke, a Plagiarist? (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1983). Alden Thompson, Inspiration. (Hagerstown, Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn, 1991).

¹¹⁰ Russell Standish. "The Remnant Herald" June 1993, Number 5. No publisher stated. under article entitled Historic Truth No 8, The Nature of Inspiration.

There is a theological controversy raging within the Adventist church at this present time. Some Fundamentalist voices are crying out that in the 1950s the leadership of the church took the church into apostasy, and today's leadership is carrying on the apostasy. Most of the theological controversy could be settled if the contestants would discuss the differences from the Scripture only and so be truly Protestant. However this is not the case. Everyone seems to think that they must justify their position from Ellen White. This is quite contrary to her own counsel;

The Testimonies of Sister White should not be carried to the front. God's word is the unerring standard. The Testimonies are not to take the place of the word of God....Let all prove their positions from the Scriptures and substantiate every point they claim as truth from the revealed word of God.¹¹¹

The big issue at stake here is, Are seventh-day Adventists a free people? Are they free to go to the Scriptures and seek truth as did the founding fathers of Seventh-day Adventism? Or are they to be locked into the traditional teachings of their past? With all the knowledge they have now at their disposal the current generation of Seventh-day Adventists have lost their innocence. The Adventist world faces a crisis regarding its moral integrity. Whole generations of Adventist theologians have agonised in despair at not being free to go directly to the Scriptures and discover truth. The church has misused the gift of prophecy. The gift needs to be understood and used in harmony with the teachings of Scripture. Knowing this, no longer may church members use a quote from Ellen White to settle theological arguments. All theology must be proved from the Scripture alone.

¹¹¹ Ellen G. White, Evangelism. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1970). 256.

The 1919 Bible Conference provided an opportunity to bring the truth regarding Ellen Whites inspiration before the people. But it did not happen. When Daniells lost his presidency over this issue many became timid and the issue was buried. But as Heppenstall has said,

Freedom belongs to man on religious grounds. Freedom is the gift of God... The most troublesome thing is suppressed truth. It will not stay suppressed...Religion that is afraid of investigation and scholarship tends towards superstition and emotionalism...Blind credulity as to the truth one holds is the refuge of sluggish minds. It relieves the individual from the real study of God's word. It settles all differences by silencing all opposing voices and denying the right to ask questions. This takes the meaning out of religion, leaving it ignorant, superficial, intolerant...The Christian possess both love of the truth and love of his neighbour. As the man who is sure of his wife is free from jealousy, so the man who is sure of the truth he holds can afford to be courteous and tolerant with others...It is easier to abuse a man by charging him with error and wrong motives than to take time to find out what he actually does believe. ¹¹²

The recent reemerging of this issue over the nature of the inspiration and function of Ellen White today can be likened to the experience of the Christian church as found in Revelation chapter 12. The true church flees only to reemerge at the end of time. Or of the return to truth as found in the great Protestant Reformation of the 16th century.

Perhaps it is the reference to the Reformation that we find our greatest parallels. When the reformers came with their open Bibles they were met with many objections: They were accused taking positions different to the established traditions of the church which had been held for over 1000 years. Today there are fundamentalist calls within Seventh-day Adventism for the preserving of "our historic positions."

¹¹² Edward Heppenstall. "Academic freedom and the Quest for Truth." Spectrum, Winter 1972. 34-38.

They wanted to take positions different to the acknowledged positions of the church fathers. To get a position accepted in that Medieval church you had to show where it had been taught by one of the fathers, not by Scripture. Today to get a position accepted many Seventh-day Adventists will not go to the Bible; but search to find an Ellen White quote.

At the time of the Reformation the Bible was kept locked up in a dead language, namely, Latin. Today many would try to keep the Bible from us by locking it up in the language of the 17th century.

Righteousness by faith was a great issue at the time of the Reformation. Was it solely by the imputed righteousness of Jesus alone; or does it also include some of my own? This is an issue which divides Seventh-day Adventism today. Some in Fundamentalist Seventh-day Adventists would take a stand like Roman Catholicism and include some of our own righteousness.¹¹³

The theological battles taking place between Fundamentalist and Evangelical Seventh-day Adventists in the 1950s, and again in the time of the 1970s on, is in reality Seventh-day Adventism striving to re-align itself into its more natural position of Evangelicalism after its slide into Fundamentalism in the 1920s. Original Adventism as it was meant to be is best personified in the writings of Ellen White. Both she and the movement she founded is by nature Evangelical and not

¹¹³ For an excellent discussion on this subject see, "True Adventism verses False" by Errol Webster and Ray Eaton. Unpublished manuscript available at the White RTesearch Centre. Catholicism has always taught that righteousness by faith means faith in what is doing in you not for you.

See also Russell Standish in *The Remnant Herald*, June 1993, No5, under the title "Historic Truth" where he declares "Christ makes us just and then declares us just."

Fundamentalist.¹¹⁴

Seventh-day Adventism was meant to be a free, open, living, dynamic movement. While Ellen White was alive she fought for this; the church slipped into the narrowness of Fundamentalism after her death. But her legacy caused the church to become better educated and return closer to what was to be eventually known as Evangelicalism. Therefore, the changes struggling to take place inside Seventh-day Adventism today are those of a movement striving to be what God always wanted it to be. To call it apostate would be paramount to hearing the Papacy calling the Protestant Reformers as being apostates because they were changing the traditions of over a thousand years. The great issues of the Protestant Reformation are still being fought today within Seventh-day Adventism. Namely freedom to go directly to the Bible and the Bible only for doctrine and teaching, and salvation to be found purely on a basis of the merits of Jesus Christ alone. Only as the Seventh-day Adventist church takes an evangelical stance towards the nature of the inspiration and function of Ellen White can this be possible.

"Church Growth" expert Dr Carl George was invited to study the strengths and weaknesses of the Adventist Church by the Columbia Union Executive Committee in January 1987. He stated in his published report these words of advice to the Seventh-day Adventist Church:

¹¹⁴ For more reading on Ellen Whites relationship to Evangelicalism see, A.N.Patrick's article "An Adventist and an Evangelical in Australia? The case of Ellen White In The 1890s". Lucas n.12, Dec 1991. 42-49. For further reading regarding Seventh-day Adventism's relationship to Fundamentalism see W.G.Johnsson's editorial "Are Adventists Fundamentalists" in Review, Jan 8, 1981. 14.

Your movement has to make a decision about Ellen White. I know this is a very, very difficult and touchy area, but sooner or later your movement has got to make a decision about the character of the ministry of Ellen G. White....

The dilemma facing Adventist in the days ahead is how you will value Ellen G. White and her contribution to the founding of your movement. She is indisputably a witness to Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. How much more than this should be imposed upon her will take a generation of scholarly debate to sort out. Adventism has nothing to fear from a close examination of its origin, its writings, its founders, because Adventism does not hang or fall with Ellen G. White. It hangs or falls with faithfulness to Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ Carl George, Empty Pews, Empty Streets. (Columbia, Maryland: Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Publications, 1988). 63,68.

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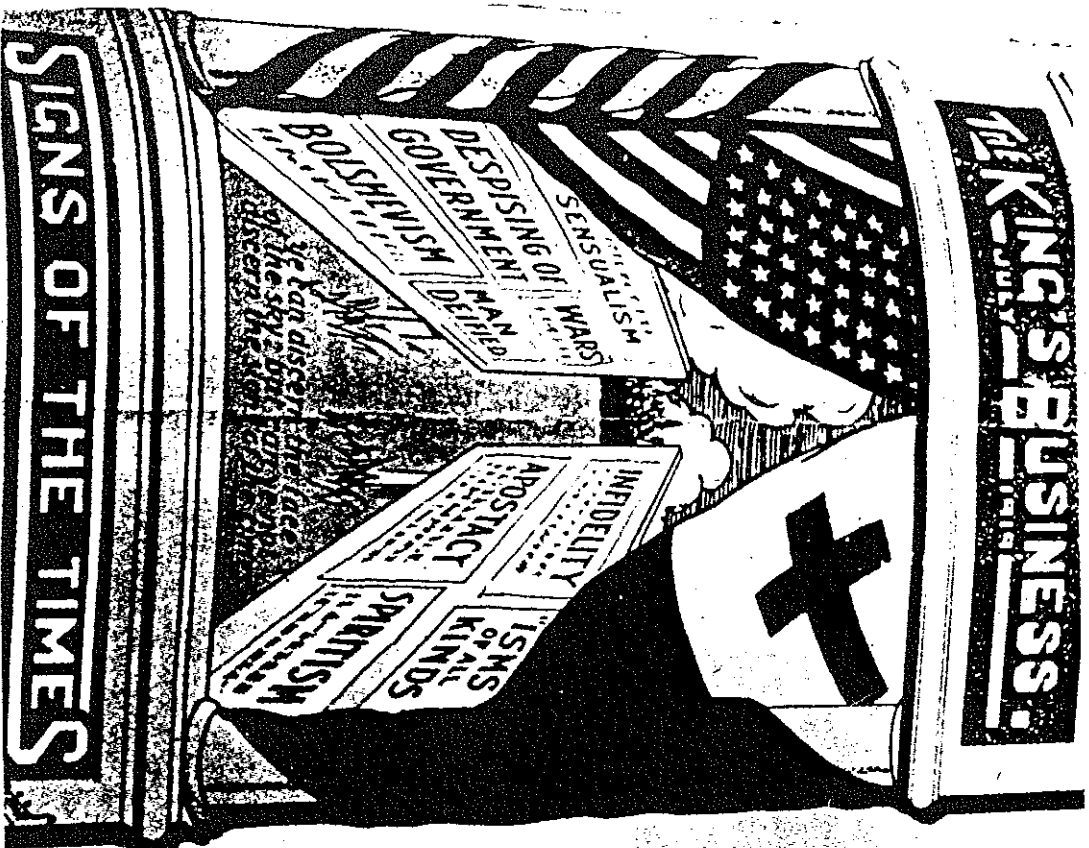
APPENDIX A

Fundamentalism and American Culture

The Shaping of Twentieth-Century
Evangelicalism: 1870-1925

GEORGE M. MARSDEN

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
Oxford New York Toronto Melbourne

Cover of July 1919 *King's Business*

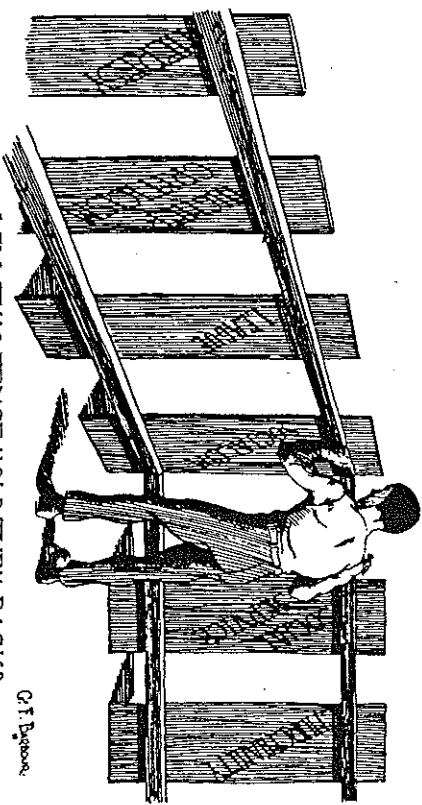
deep disturbance awakened by cultural trends and the attempt to continue to respond only in the realm of prophecy and evangelism was more acute than ever. This is evident in the *Christian Worker's Magazine* of July 1919, in which editor James M. Gray identified the pressure to join the League of Nations as "the third greatest crisis" in the nation's history. Gray averred that to join the League would be to commit "national suicide," and urged his readers to

send for the literature of Henry Watterson's "League for the Preservation of American Independence," which portrayed the League as incompatible with the "fundamentals of American independence." Yet, having yielded thus far to the desire to save the nation, Gray clearly was embarrassed and attempted to disclaim that he was suggesting anything more than prayer. "We have no position to maintain and are not taking sides," said Gray, "for this is a political more than a religious question, but we are urging our readers to reflect, . . . and above all to pray that the God of nations . . . may rule . . . that no harm may come to our nation and that His will may be done in the world." By the time of the national election the next year, Gray dropped even this pretense of neutrality. He made it clear that both for reasons of national welfare (it would lead to war) and because of prophetic warnings (the league probably was condemned as the latter-day revival of the Roman Empire) Christians should do all they would to oppose the League.⁷

From *The King's Business*, June 1919, p. 588



Does Anything But The
Undiluted Gospel
Go To The Roots of The
World's Diseases?



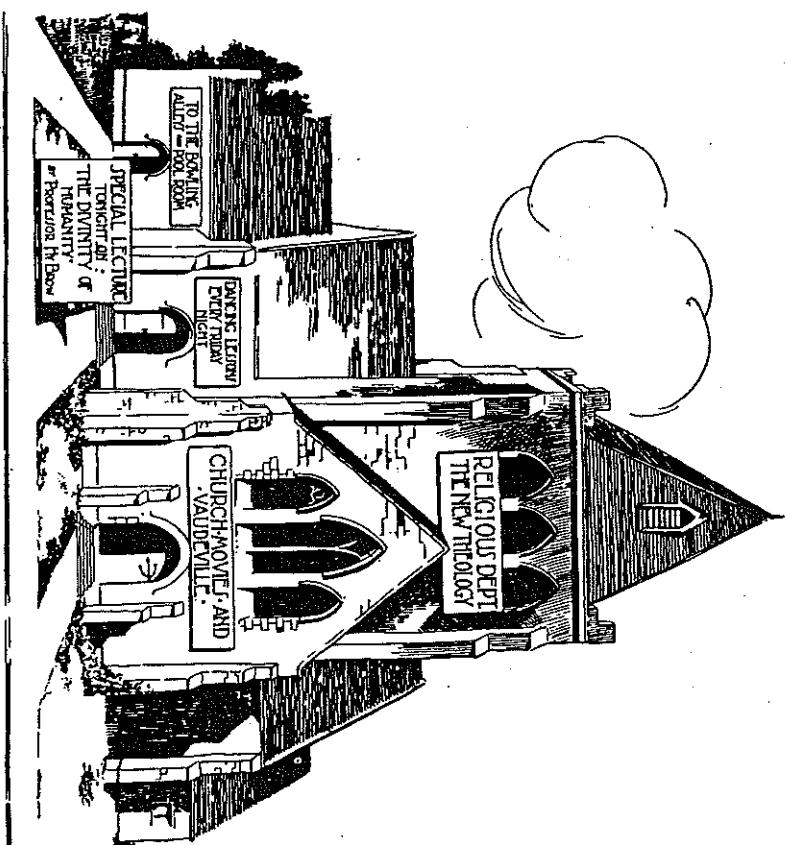
WILL THIS FENCE HOLD THEM BACK?

C.F. Payne

Ironically, the premillennial publication that reacted most strongly to the threat of Bolshevism was the radical anti-cultural journal *Our Hope*, in which the war seemed to have created a heightened political consciousness. Although the editor, Arno C. Gaebelein, stuck to the sign-of-the-times format, his alarm about the political situation was clearly immediate and very real. For Gaebelein the pieces of the prophetic puzzle had suddenly fallen into place with the dramatic fulfillment of a prophecy. In 1916, before the Revolution, he had predicted that Russia (the "great power of the North") would "play a prominent and to herself fatal part during the predicted end of this age. . . ."⁸ Now the Bolshevik Revolution made it clear what that role would be. In the "danger of Bolshevism," the bombings and attempted bombings of 1919, he now could see clearly that "The Beast Lifts the Head in Our Land." The government had been naïve and lax with respect to radicalism, and Americans should now expect not less but more lawlessness as "the full power of the god of this age—Satan"—is revealed.⁹ On the same subject a year later, he pictured Americans as confronted with a life or death choice between civilization and communism. "*We are going through a reconstruction period*," he said, ". . . and either we are coming out of it as a family of nations in which rich and poor alike will have been chastened, and in which each citizen will accord to his fellowman the same rights and privileges that he wants for himself, or the reconstruction period will expire by giving birth to a *World Communist Internationale*, in which our civilization and religion will be totally destroyed!!!"¹⁰

A sense of doom was created by apparent confirmations of premillennial pessimism in the daily news, and heightened by growing dismay about the moral condition of the nation. Premillennialists shared with many conservative Americans the conviction that the moral foundations of the nation were rapidly crumbling. Statistics documented the rise in crime rates.¹¹ Many Americans now flaunted the vicious habits often condemned by evangelical preachers. Young men and even women were openly smoking—*The King's Business* spoke of "The Yellow Peril of America."¹² It was particularly galling that churches accepted such changes. Methodist church choirs, for instance, allowed young women to display "brazen bared knees." "Who is responsible for this change of custom from the bended knee . . . ?" queried *The King's Business*. Dancing, once an abomination to Methodists, was now allowed even in their churches.¹³

All of these various postwar phenomena could easily be seen as related to one another. In November 1919 the Reverend Oliver W. Van Osdel, a prominent premillennialist pastor in Michigan, did just that in a sermon on the signs of the times. Van Osdel decried everything from such classic sins as selfishness, covetousness, and greed, to the League of Nations, the celebration of the anniversary of the Armistice by public dancing in the streets, and Bynnasiums and moving pictures in the churches. In an impressionistic way



CLEVELAND MOFFETT'S IDEAL CHURCH

From *The King's Business*, May 1919, p. 396.

he summed up a fairly typical reaction to the complexity of the events and their relationships:

Sometimes people ask what are the objections to dancing and theaters and card playing and such things; they say these are not to be severely condemned; but you will notice that the people who indulge in these worldly things are always loose in doctrine . . . the two go together, and when you find people indulging in worldliness they become loose in doctrine, then apostasy easily creeps in, the union of Christendom becomes possible and probably will be united through corrupt doctrine under one head, the Pope of Rome.¹⁴

One indication that many premillennialists were shifting their emphasis—away from just evangelizing, praying, and waiting for the end time, toward more intense concern with retarding degenerative trends—was the role they played in the formation of the first explicitly fundamentalist or-

came to Calvary Baptist Church in New York in the spring of 1918. He was a Southerner, rather well educated, who had held several other major city pastorates. In his early career he was an ardent champion of both moral and social reform, attacking not only notorious vices such as prostitution and the use of alcohol, but also advocating some more progressive causes, such as women's and children's labor reform, wage reform, fair housing, and prison reform.²⁸ During this period, although he preached a traditional Gospel of salvation, he was not a premillennialist in any significant sense and often sounded more like a postmillennialist believer in progress.²⁹

Soon after his arrival in New York, the two major characteristics of his later career appeared: his social message became focused almost entirely on notorious vices,³⁰ and he emerged as a prominent card-carrying premillennial fundamentalist. His social program is evident in his nationally published sermon of the summer of 1918, "Will New York Be Destroyed if it Does not Repent?" in which he attacked the vice, gluttony, gaming, and indecency of New York's hotels and cabarets, comparing the city with Nineveh, Babylon, Sodom, Gomorrah, and (drawing upon more recent history) San Francisco before the earthquake. Although Straton pictured New York as facing an impending doom, there was still no trace of premillennial prophecy in his message. Rather, he suggested that "the destiny of the human race for hundreds of years to come is in the balance."³¹ Despite the lack of explicit premillennialism in his prophetic preaching of 1918, by 1919 Straton had identified himself with premillennial fundamentalism and was in fact a speaker at the first WCFA conference.³²

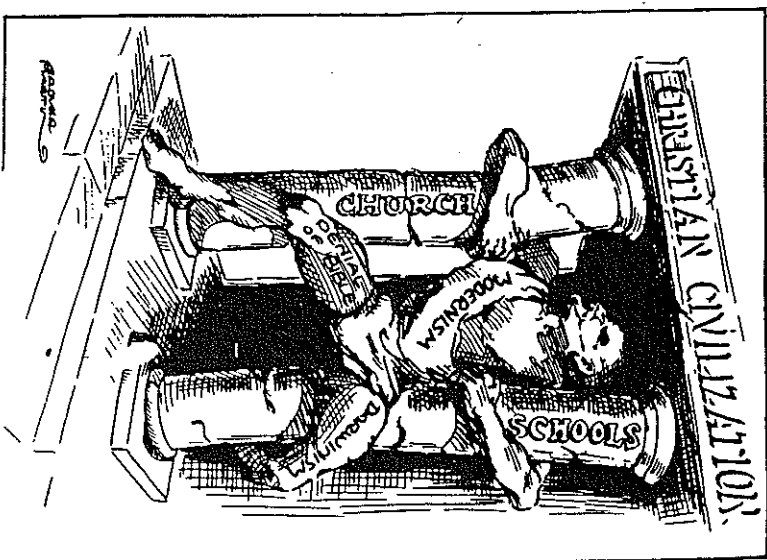
Premillennialism seems not to have dampened Straton's zeal to expose and eradicate the immorality of his time. The most sensational period in his career, in fact, commenced in the spring of 1920 with a highly publicized raid and exposé of vice in the Times Square area. During the succeeding years Straton supplied the New York newspapers with a steady stream of sensational attacks on vice, including everything from Sabbath desecration to ballroom dancing and prize fighting. Such attacks helped to tie fundamentalism to the popular idea of the Puritan tradition as morally repressive. One observer described Straton as "like Oliver Cromwell in a nightclub, or Bishop Asbury at the Saratoga races."³³ Straton's own view of the situation is caught in the title of his two most sensational books: "The Menace of Immorality in Church and State" (1920) and "Fighting the Devil in Modern Babylon" (1929).

Despite this latter title, Straton never quite made up his mind whether the United States was Babylon or the New Israel. Perhaps he thought of New York City as Babylon in the midst of Israel. At any rate, despite his non-stop prophecies of doom, he always remained a full-fledged patriot. Indicating that "the deadliest danger now confronting America is the union of irreligion and political radicalism," he declared:

Can anyone doubt that God has lodged with us in this free land the ark of the covenant of humanity's hopes? So surely as God led forth ancient Israel for a unique and glorious mission, so does he seem to have raised up Christian America for such an hour as this.³⁴

Straton's impetus for his fierce attacks on the dance, theaters, and other worldly amusements seems to have been a sense that Christian America was losing touch with its foundation in Biblical teaching. The Bible, he said, in the context of a typical attack on dancing, "is the foundation of all that is decent and right in our civilization."³⁵ Thus it was consistent for Straton to identify himself with the central fundamentalist cause—the defense of the fundamental doctrines of the faith.³⁶ For Straton, whether attacking vice or debating modernists, the key issue was the same—the all-importance of Scripture. Frequently he made the accusation that attacks on the Bible would lead to lawlessness and ultimately to the total demise of civilization. At this point the theological aspect of fundamentalism merged with its con-

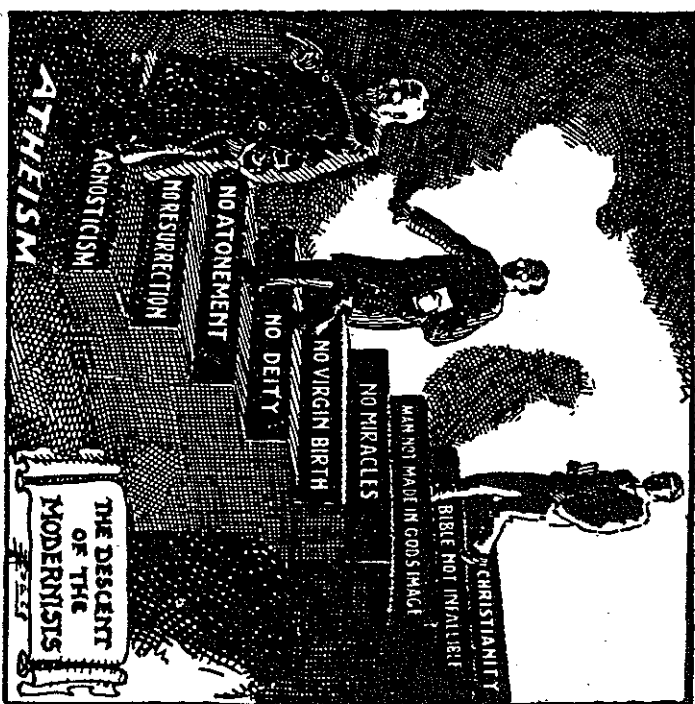
From *The King's Business*, July 1922, p. 642.



fundamentalists to settle on a coherent strategy. Most Baptist fundamentalists agreed that they should establish some sort of creedal test of orthodoxy within the denomination, but moderates such as Curtis Lee Laws, J. C. Massee, and Frank M. Goodchild, saw this move as demanding careful preparation and in 1921 had delayed presenting their new creedal proposal. Fundamentalist indecision was still apparent at the 1922 Convention. William B. Riley, however, forced the issue on everyone by proposing the adoption of one of the traditional Baptist creeds, the New Hampshire Confession. The opponents of fundamentalism totally outmaneuvered Riley. In a shrewd countermove, Cornelius Woelfkin, a liberal pastor from New York City, offered as a substitute, "That the New Testament is the all-sufficient ground of our faith and practice, and we need no other statement." Here was an appeal to a more sacred and seemingly more fundamental Baptist tradition than any creed. After heated debate Woelfkin's proposal was adopted 1,264 to 637.⁶

This dramatic reversal for Baptist fundamentalism, at the very moment when it should have been reaching the height of its power, split the movement irreparably. Apparently each of the conservative parties blamed the strategy of the other for the defeat. Protesting the moderation of the leadership associated with Laws, militants followed Riley in the formation of the Baptist Bible Union. This new agency was very close in both character and personnel to the WCFA, except that the Baptist group did not officially prescribe premillennialism (because of difficulties this would have created for some Southern and Canadian Baptists).⁷ Presumably in counter-reaction, the more moderate Baptist fundamentalists became even more cautious in succeeding years, and in subsequent disputes stressed the necessity of working within the Convention structures to retain whatever influence they could. They thus became the first of many once-militant fundamentalist groups to drop some of their militancy when faced with the stark alternative of a bitter and devastating battle that would surely lead to schism and leave a denomination in ruins.⁸

Despite the Baptist disarray, fundamentalism was advancing elsewhere. At almost the same moment that the Baptist fundamentalist drive was stalled, Presbyterian conservatives entered the conflict in full force. By early 1922 the smallest spark would have sufficed for the fundamentalist furor to renew the raging controversy in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. The kindling temperature of conservative Presbyterians had always been low. No mere spark, Harry Emerson Fosdick's sermon, although addressed primarily to the Baptist situation, hit the Presbyterian Church like a bombshell. The Baptist Fosdick was by special arrangement the associate pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of New York, where he preached his famous sermon. The conservatives, centered in Philadelphia, had long been appalled by loose practices common in the New York Presbytery. Since the early twentieth century they had been complaining that the New York Presbytery did not demand orthodoxy of its ministerial candidates, and such complaints had led to the declaration of fundamentals by the General Assembly in 1910 and 1916.



From William Jennings Bryan, *Seven Questions in Dispute* (New York, 1924).

Fosdick himself had been a particular target for conservative attacks for some time.⁹ His sermon, together with the implication (not directly stated) that he agreed fully with the liberal views that he described, seemed to be the clearest case of open heresy in a hundred years.

Clarence E. Macartney, pastor of the Arch Street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, and like Fosdick one of the famed preachers of the day, led the conservative attack. To "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" Macartney replied with "Shall Unbelief Win?" in which he showed how Fosdick's naturalistic alternatives to "fundamentalism" diverged from traditional Christianity. When leaders such as Fosdick were "blasting at the Rock of Ages," it was certainly time to "contend for the faith."¹⁰ Macartney himself led the drive for a dramatic conservative victory in the Presbyterian denomination. Under his guidance the Presbytery of Philadelphia petitioned the General Assembly to condemn the teachings expressed in Fosdick's sermon and to instruct the Presbytery of New York to see that further preaching from the First Church conformed to orthodox Presbyterian standards. This proposal became the focal point of intense campaigns of charges and countercharges during the months preceding the General Assembly of 1923.¹¹

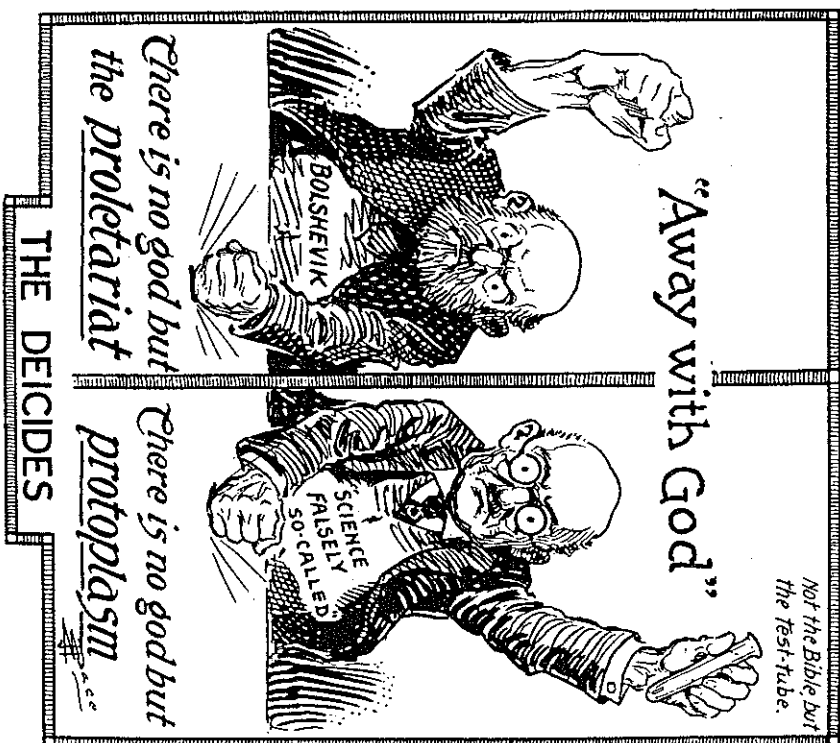
as in the campaign to legislate against evolution. Nor was it particularly incongruous for a politician to emerge as the chief spokesman for fundamentalism. It does seem a bit anomalous that the premillennial leaders should fall all over themselves in their enthusiasm to enlist Bryan as leader of their organizations; that phenomenon is perhaps the best evidence that premillennial otherworldliness was not decisive in determining fundamentalists' behavior. The belief that America should be a Christian nation founded on God's word was more deeply rooted in their tradition.

Fundamentalism had indeed become politicized in the 1920s, but this politicization was haphazard. Although many fundamentalists supported the anti-evolution crusade, they do not seem to have been very united on other political questions. They did participate in the general conservative Protestant opposition to Roman Catholicism and Al Smith in 1928, and they also joined with most Protestants, conservative and liberal alike, in supporting prohibition.⁹ Otherwise, the movement does not appear to have been identified with any political stand. The immediate origins of fundamentalism reveal almost no systematic political thought, except perhaps some inherited wisdom from the days of the nineteenth-century evangelical establishment—which of course tended to be conservative and Republican. For reasons already mentioned, revivalists, premillennialists, holiness teachers, and Baptist and Presbyterian conservatives had concerned themselves relatively little with such subjects since the Civil War. Certainly they had developed no clear consensus on them, except that the church should not be involved in political affairs. The closest thing to a political principle that most fundamentalists seemed to share was a profession of individualism that paralleled their theological dictum that the individual was the basic unit in the work of salvation. Even this principle was not consistently developed, since many fundamentalists held that God judged whole nations. Seldom, in fact, did fundamentalists work out their political views in any systematic way.¹⁰ In general individualistic, not oriented toward politics, and suspicious of the growing connection between liberal theology and liberal politics, the precursors of fundamentalism had drifted in a politically conservative direction. Yet they were essentially drifting, rather than moving purposefully. Hence after 1917, when social and political issues once again loomed large, they responded to the issues haphazardly and on the basis of inherited prejudices and formulae, with next to no theoretical preparation to guide them.

The emergence of the notorious political extremism of later fundamentalism should be considered in this context. Before World War I the lists of vices illustrating the decline of civilization contained only scattered references to socialism and anarchism. In 1919, fundamentalists, and most Americans, became acutely aware of the Bolshevik threat. The premillennialists' earlier predictions concerning the menacing role of Russia in the end times added a degree of plausibility to such fears. It was not until 1923 or 1924 that

these fears in their most extreme forms began commonly to appear to fundamentalist literature. This development seemed to be connected with their anti-evolution interests. "As a matter of fact," said *Moody Monthly* in 1923, citing Frank Norris as an authority, "evolution is Bolshevism in the long run. . . . It eliminates the idea of a personal God, and with that goes all authority in government, all law and order."¹¹ At about this time, William B. Riley began to stress the connection between socialism and evolutionism as atheistic threats to "Christian America" and its schools. The *King's Business* likewise began to emphasize the seriousness of the communist threat.¹² Increasingly, modernism, evolutionism, and Bolshevism were lumped together as part of the same basic threat to Bible belief. "Christianism reposes upon a book, the Bible," *Christian Fundamentals in School and Church* quoted with approval this statement of a Union Seminary (New York) graduate who in 1926 described his school as linked to the "Socialistic Revolution."

From *The King's Business* (May 1925), p. 197.



XXIV. Fundamentalism as an Intellectual Phenomenon

Clarence Darrow said in Dayton that his intention was to prevent "bigots and ignoramuses" from controlling the schools. This view of the fundamentalist intellect would continue to prevail in the liberal community. Stewart Cole populated his *History of Fundamentalism* with "religiously disturbed" defenders of "antiquated beliefs," contending against "open-minded seekers for the truth that makes man free."¹ According to H. Richard Niebuhr "inadequate development of educational institutions" and "the distrust of reason and the emphasis on emotion" resulted from the isolation, poverty, and hardships of farm life.² Norman Furniss observed that "ignorance . . . was a feature of the movement; it became a badge the orthodox often wore proudly." Fundamentalists' "distorted opinions," said Furniss, were based on "complete misunderstanding" of evolution and modernism. They had to resort to coercion because they "were aligning themselves against ideas that had the weight of fact behind them. . . ."³ These interpretations gained some stature in the American historical community when Richard Hofstadter identified the "paranoid style" of fundamentalist thought as a species of "anti-intellectualism" reflecting a "generically prejudiced mind."⁴

As Hofstadter showed, anti-intellectualism was a feature of American revivalism, and fundamentalists were certainly not free from this tendency. The suggestion that the ancestors of Ph.D.s were monkeys and baboons was always good for a laugh from an anti-evolution crowd. Likewise the titles of the learned were enumerated "D.D., Ph.D., L.L.D., Litt.D."—ending with "A.S.S." Even the well-educated and usually humorless Reuben Torrey would stoop to this.⁵ Moreover, some champions of the Bible school movement were beginning to assert that Bible education was the only proper education, not just an expedient for lay evangelists, as it was originally conceived. There was a strong tradition in America that the Bible in the hands of the common person was of greater value than any amount of education.⁶ As William Jennings Bryan often said "It is better to trust in the Rock of Ages, than to know the age of the rocks; it is better for one to know that he is close to the Heavenly Father, than to know how far the stars in the heavens are apart."⁷

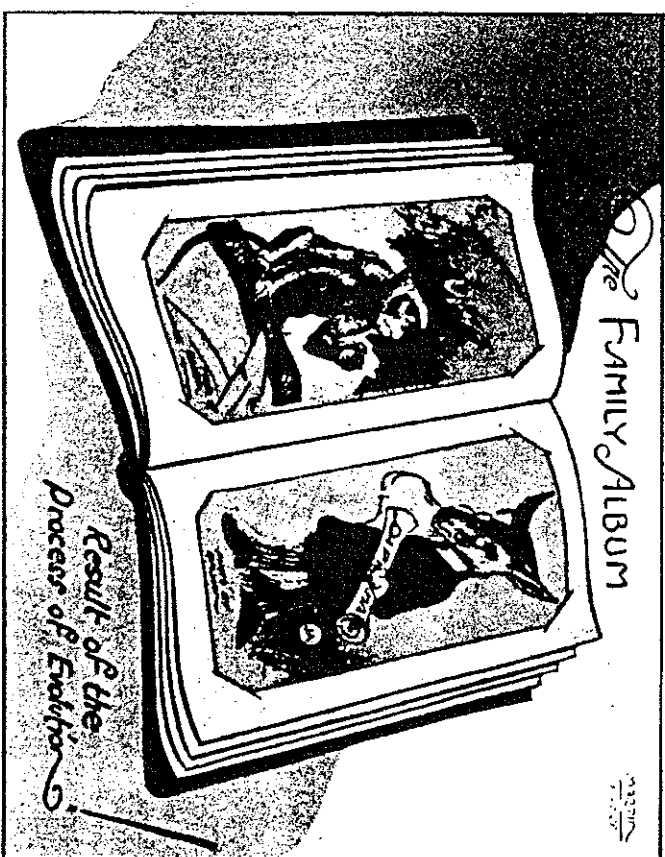
If one reads fundamentalist literature, however, it is apparent that such Bible-versus-science themes were usually brought up only as a last line of defense. The Bible was thought to be scientific (in the sense of reporting the facts accurately)⁸ whereas evolution was wholly unscientific. Scientists and

Ph.D.s might deserve ridicule, but not *because* they were scientists or Ph.D.s. The joke was that in spite of so much learning they arrived at conclusions that common sense knew to be patently unscientific.

It was endlessly repeated that true science rested on facts, while evolution was mere hypothesis. This was basic to William Jennings Bryan's argument. "It is not scientific truth to which Christians object," he wrote for a speech meant to be the capstone of the trial at Dayton, "for true science is classified knowledge and nothing can be scientific unless it is true." "Evolution," on the other hand, "is not truth; it is merely hypothesis—it is millions of guesses strung together." It was appalling to Bryan that a doctrine so destructive to both Christian belief and civilization was based on guesses that were "absurd as well as groundless."¹⁰

In several respects the views of Bryan and Darrow were similar. Each considered the other's view ridiculous, and wondered aloud how any sane person could hold it. Each thought that the theories of the other were being imposed by the state on school children and saw the legal issue as the abridgment of traditional American freedoms. Bryan pointed out that Darrow, acting for the defense in the notorious Leopold and Loeb child murder, had suggested the Leopold had taken too seriously the evolutionary views of

From *The King's Business* (August 1923), p. 809.



The ~~BATTLE~~ of the CROSSROADS

CHRISTIANITY
AT THE
CROSSROADS

MODERNISM | FUNDAMENTALISM

MODERNISM
or
FUNDAMENTALISM

Which?

Har.
cont.
PT
78
6
1924

CHIEF
GARNER STONE
CHRIST
JESUS

EVOLUTION

APPENDIX B